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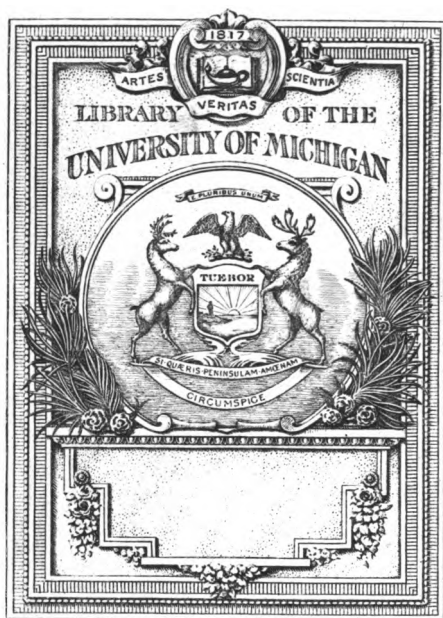
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THE
LIVES OF THE APOSTLES,
AND THE TWO EVANGELISTS
SAINT MARK AND SAINT LUKE;

WITH
AN INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE
PATRIARCHAL, MOSAICAL, AND EVANGELICAL DISPENSATIONS.

BY
WILLIAM CAVE, D. D.

A NEW EDITION, CAREFULLY REVISED,
BY
HENRY CARY, M.A.
WORCESTER COLLEGE, AND PERPETUAL CURATE OF ST. PAUL'S, OXFORD.



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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

THE Editor of the work now presented to the public has only had to continue the labour bestowed on Cave's *Lives of the Fathers of the First Four Centuries*; which, as he stated in the Advertisement prefixed to that work, has consisted in a careful revision of the text, and collation and examination of passages quoted and referred to.

TABLE OF EDITIONS REFERRED TO.

- | | |
|--|---|
| AMBROSIUS, <i>Par.</i> 1686-90. | Chronicon Alexandrin. seu Paschale, per du |
| Ammianus Marcellinus, <i>Lugd. Bat.</i> 1693. | Fresne, <i>Par.</i> 1688. |
| Arnobius, <i>Lugd. Bat.</i> 1651. | Chrysostomus, <i>Par.</i> 1718. |
| Athanasius, <i>Par.</i> 1698. | Clemens Alexandrinus, <i>Oxon.</i> 1715. |
| Augustinus, <i>Par.</i> 1683. | Clemens Romanus, inter PATRES Apostolicos. |
| Baronius Annal. <i>Mogunt.</i> 1601-8. | Cyprianus, <i>Oxon.</i> 1682. |
| ——— Martyrol. <i>Antv.</i> 1589. | Cyril, Alexandrinus, <i>Lutet.</i> 1638. |
| Basilus Magnus, <i>Par.</i> 1721. | Cyril, Hierosol. <i>Oxon.</i> 1703. |
| Beda, <i>Basil.</i> 1563. | Dexter, Chronicon. <i>Lugd.</i> 1627. |
| Benjamin. Itin. <i>Antv.</i> 1575. | Dionysius, Areopag. <i>Antv.</i> 1634. |
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 ——— *De locis Hebraicis*, *Par.* 1631.
 ——— *Demonstr. Evang.* *Par.* 1628.
 ——— *Præpar. Evang.* *Par.* 1628.
 Firmicus, *Matern. de error prof. relig.* cum
 Minuc. Felic. per J. a Wower, *Oxon.* 1662.
 Gregorius Nazianzen, *Lut. Par.* 1609.
 Gregorius Nyssen, *Par.* 1615.
 ——— *et Par.* 1623.
 Gregorius Thaumaturgus, *Par.* 1621.
 Hieronymus, *Par.* 1706.
 Hilarius, *Pictav. Par.* 1693.
 Idatius, *Fasti consulares*, inter opera Sir-
 mondi, *Par.* 1696.
 Ignatius, inter *PATRES Apostolicos*.
 Josephus, *Oxon.* 1720.
 Irenæus, *Par.* 1710.
 Isidorus Peleus, *Par.* 1638.
 Julianus, *Lips.* 1696.
 Julius Firmicus, *Par.* 1668.
 Justinus Martyr, *Par.* 1742.
 Lactantius, *Lut. Par.* 1748.
 Libanius, *Lips. et Lutet.* 1616-27.
 Nicephorus, *Hist. Eccl. Par.* 1630.
 Oecumenius, *Par.* 1631.
 Origen, *Par.* 1733.
 Orosius, *Lugd. Bat.* 1738.
 Patres Apostolici, per Cotelierum, 1724.
 Philo Judæus, *Lut. Par.* 1640.
 Philostorgius cum EUSEBII *Hist. Eccl.*
 Photius, *Myriabiblion sive Bibliotheca*,
 1611.
 ——— *Epist.* *Lond.* 1651.
 Polycarpus, inter *PATRES Apostolicos*.
 Pontius Diac. vit. Cypriani, cum CYPRIANO.
 Procopius, *Par.* 1662.
 Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* cum EUSEBII *Hist.*
 Eccl.
 Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* cum EUSEBII *Hist.*
 Eccl.
 Strabo, *Geograph.* *Amst.* 1707.
 Suidas, *Genev.* 1818.
 Sulpicius Severus, *Verona*, 1754.
 Surius, *Col. Agr.* 1576.
 Tertullian, *Lut. Par.* 1664.
 Theodor. Lect. cum EUSEBII *Hist. Eccl.*
 Theodoretus, *Opera. Halæ*, 1770.
 ——— *Hist. Eccl.* cum EUSEBII *Hist.*
 Eccl.
 Vincentius Lirinensis, *Cantab.* 1687.
 Zonaras, *Par.* 1687.
 Zosimus, *Lips.* 1784.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD

NATHANAEL LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM,

AND CLERK OF THE CLOSET TO HIS MAJESTY.

MY LORD,

Nothing but a great experience of your Lordship's candour could warrant the laying what concernment I have in these papers at your Lordship's feet. Not but that the subject is in itself great and venerable, and a considerable part of it built upon that authority that needs no patronage to defend it; but to prefix your Lordship's name to a subject so thinly and meanly managed, may, perhaps, deserve a bigger apology than I can make. I have only brought some few scattered handfuls of primitive story, contenting myself to glean where I could not reap. And I am well assured, that your Lordship's wisdom and love to truth would neither allow me to make my materials, nor to trade in legends and fabulous reports. And yet, alas! how little solid foundation is left to build upon in these matters! So fatally mischievous was the carelessness of those who ought to have been the guardians of books and learning in their several ages, in suffering the records of the ancient church to perish. Unfaithful trustees, to look no better after such divine and

inestimable treasures committed to them. Not to mention those infinite devastations that, in all ages, have been made by wars and flames, which certainly have proved the most severe and merciless plagues and enemies to books.

By such unhappy accidents as these, we have been robbed of the treasures of the wiser and better ages of the world, and especially the records of the first times of Christianity, whereof scarce any footsteps do remain. So that in this inquiry I have been forced to traverse remote and desert paths, ways that afford but little fruit to the weary passenger: but the consideration that it was primitive and apostolical, sweetened my journey, and rendered it pleasant and delightful. Our inbred thirst after knowledge naturally obliges us to pursue the notices of former times, which are recommended to us with this peculiar advantage, that the stream must needs be purer and clearer, the nearer it comes to the fountain: for the ancients (as Plato speaks^a) were *κρείττορες ἡμῶν, καὶ ἐγγυτέρω θεῶν οἰκοῦντες*, “better than we, and dwelt nearer to the gods.” And though, it is true, the state of those times is very obscure and dark, and truth oft covered over with heaps of idle and improbable traditions, yet may it be worth our labour to seek for a few jewels, though under a whole heap of rubbish. “Is not the gleanings of the ancients (say the Jews) better than the vintage of latter times?” The very fragments of antiquity are venerable, and at once instruct our minds and gratify our curiosity. Besides, I was somewhat the more inclinable to retire again into these studies, that I might get as far as I could from the crowd and the noise of a quarrelsome and contentious age.

^a In Phileb.

My Lord—We live in times wherein religion is almost wholly disputed into talk and clamour; men wrangle eternally about useless and insignificant notions, and which have no tendency to make a man either wiser or better: and in these quarrels the laws of charity are violated, and men persecute one another with hard names and characters of reproach, and, after all, consecrate their fierceness with the honourable title of zeal for truth. And what is yet a much sorer evil, the peace and order of an excellent church, incomparably the best that ever was since the first ages of the gospel, is broken down, her holy offices derided, her solemn assemblies deserted, her laws and constitutions slighted, the guides and ministers of religion despised, and reduced to their primitive character, “the scum and offscouring of the world.” How much these evils have contributed to the atheism and impiety of the present age, I shall not take upon me to determine; sure I am, the thing itself is too sadly visible; men are not content to be modest and retired atheists, and, with the fool, to say only in their hearts, “there is no God:” but impiety appears with an open forehead, and disputes its place in every company; and without any regard to the voice of nature, the dictates of conscience, and the common sense of mankind, men peremptorily determine against a Supreme Being, account it a pleasant divertisement to droll upon religion, and a piece of wit to plead for atheism. To avoid the press and troublesome importunity of such uncomfortable reflections, I find no better way, than to retire into those primitive and better times, those first purest ages of the gospel, when men really were what they pretended to be, when a solid piety and devotion, a strict temperance and sobriety, a catholic and unbounded charity, an exemplary honesty and integrity, a great reverence for every thing

that was divine and sacred, rendered Christianity venerable to the world, and led not only the rude and the barbarous, but the learned and politer part of mankind in triumph after it.

But, my Lord, I must remember that the minutes of great men are sacred, and not to be invaded by every tedious impertinent address. I have done, when I have begged leave to acquaint your Lordship, that had it not been more through other men's fault than my own, these papers had many months since waited upon you in the number of those public congratulations which gave you joy of that great place which you worthily sustain in the church. Which that you may long and prosperously enjoy, happily adorn, and successfully discharge, to the honour of God, the benefit of the church, and the endearing your Lordship's memory to posterity, is the hearty prayer of,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's faithfully devoted servant,

WILLIAM CAVE.

TO THE READER.

THE design of the following Apparatus is only to present the reader with a short scheme of the state of things in the preceding periods of the church, to let him see by what degrees and measures the evangelical state was introduced, and what methods God in all ages made use of to conduct mankind in the paths of piety and virtue. In the infancy of the world he taught men by the dictates of nature, and the common notices of good and evil, (*τὸ πρεσβύτατον νόμιμον*, as Philo calls them,^a “the most ancient law,”) by lively oracles, and great examples of piety. He set forth the holy patriarchs (as Chrysostom observes^b) as tutors to the rest of mankind; who by their religious lives might train up others to the practice of virtue, and, as physicians, be able to cure the minds of those who were infected and overrun with vice. Afterwards, (says he,) having sufficiently testified his care of their welfare and happiness by many instances of a wise and benign providence towards them, both in the land of Canaan and in Egypt, he gave them prophets, and by them wrought signs and wonders, together with innumerable other expressions of his bounty. At last, finding that none of these methods did succeed, not patriarchs, not prophets, not miracles, not daily warnings and chastisements brought upon the world, he gave the last and highest instance of his love and goodness to mankind: he sent his only begotten Son out of his own bosom,

^a Lib. de Abrah. p. 350.

^b Homil. xxvii. in Genes. s. 1. vol. iv. p. 256.

τῶν ψυχῶν καὶ τῶν σωμάτων ἱατρὸν, “the great physician both of soul and body;” who taking upon him the form of a servant, and being born of a virgin, conversed in the world, and bore our sorrows and infirmities, that by rescuing human nature from under the weight and burden of sin, he might exalt it to eternal life. A brief account of these things is the main intent of the following discourse; wherein the reader will easily see, that I considered not what might, but what was fit to be said, with respect to the end I designed it for. It was drawn up under some more disadvantageous circumstances than a matter of this nature did require; which, were it worth the while to represent to the reader, might possibly plead for a softer censure. However, such as it is, it is submitted to the reader’s ingenuity and candour.

W. C.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
An Apparatus, or Discourse Introductory to the whole Work, concerning the three great Dispensations of the Church, Patriarchal, Mosaical, and Evangelical.	
SECTION I.—Of the Patriarchal Dispensation - - - - -	1
SECTION II.—Of the Mosaical Dispensation - - - - -	42
SECTION III.—Of the Evangelical Dispensation - - - - -	86
Introduction to the Lives of the Apostles - - - - -	107
The Life of St. Peter.	
SECTION I.—Of St. Peter, from his Birth till his first coming to Christ - -	135
SECTION II.—Of St. Peter, from his first coming to Christ till his being called to be a Disciple - - - - -	144
SECTION III.—Of St. Peter, from his Election to the Apostolate till the Confession which he made of Christ - - - - -	148
SECTION IV.—Of St. Peter, from the Time of his Confession till our Lord's last Passover - - - - -	154
SECTION V.—Of St. Peter, from the last Passover till the Death of Christ -	163
SECTION VI.—Of St. Peter, from Christ's Resurrection till his Ascension -	170
SECTION VII.—St. Peter's Acts, from our Lord's Ascension till the Dispersion of the Church - - - - -	176
SECTION VIII.—Of St. Peter's Acts, from the Dispersion of the Church at Jerusalem till his Contest with St. Paul at Antioch - - - - -	189
SECTION IX.—Of St. Peter's Acts, from the end of the sacred Story till his Martyrdom - - - - -	199
SECTION X.—The Character of his Person and Temper, and an Account of his Writings - - - - -	207
SECTION XI.—An Inquiry into St. Peter's going to Rome - - - - -	216
An Appendix to the preceding Section, containing a Vindication of St. Peter's being at Rome - - - - -	223
The Life of St. Paul.	
SECTION I.—Of St. Paul, from his Birth till his Conversion - - - - -	233
SECTION II.—Of St. Paul, from his Conversion till the Council of Jerusalem -	242
SECTION III.—Of St. Paul, from the Time of the Synod at Jerusalem till his Departure from Athens - - - - -	251
SECTION IV.—Of St. Paul's Acts at Corinth and Ephesus - - - - -	263

The Life of St. Paul.

SECTION V.—St. Paul's Acts, from his Departure till his Arraignment before Felix - - - - - 273

SECTION VI.—Of St. Paul, from his first Trial before Felix till his coming to Rome - - - - - 283

SECTION VII.—St. Paul's Acts, from his coming to Rome till his Martyrdom - 292

SECTION VIII.—The Description of his Person and Temper, together with an Account of his Writings - - - - - 303

SECTION IX.—The principal Controversies that exercised the Church in his Time - - - - - 315

The Life of St. Andrew - - - - - 339

The Life of St. James the Great - - - - - 348

The Life of St. John - - - - - 360

The Life of St. Philip - - - - - 381

The Life of St. Bartholomew - - - - - 387

The Life of St. Matthew - - - - - 393

The Life of St. Thomas - - - - - 403

The Life of St. James the Less - - - - - 411

The Life of St. Simon the Zealot - - - - - 422

The Life of St. Jude - - - - - 426

The Life of St. Matthias - - - - - 433

The Life of St. Mark the Evangelist - - - - - 439

The Life of St. Luke the Evangelist - - - - - 448

Dyptycha Apostolica: or, a brief Enumeration and Account of the Apostles and their Successors, for the first three hundred Years in the five great Churches, said to have been founded by them, thence called by the Ancients, Apostolical Churches, viz. Antioch, Rome, Jerusalem, Byzantium or Constantinople, and Alexandria - - - - - 455

AN
APPARATUS,
 OR
 DISCOURSE INTRODUCTORY TO THE WHOLE WORK,
 CONCERNING THE THREE GREAT
 DISPENSATIONS OF THE CHURCH,
 PATRIARCHAL, MOSAICAL, AND EVANGELICAL.

SECTION I.

OF THE PATRIARCHAL DISPENSATION.

The tradition of Elias. The three great periods of the church. The patriarchal age. The laws then in force natural or positive. Natural laws, what, evinced from the testimony of natural conscience. The seven precepts of the sons of Noah. Their respect to the law of nature. Positive laws under that dispensation. Eating blood why prohibited. The mystery and signification of it. Circumcision, when commanded, and why. The laws concerning religion. Their public worship, what. Sacrifices, in what sense natural, and how far instituted. The manner of God's testifying his acceptance. What the place of their public worship. Altars and groves, whence. Abraham's Oak, its long continuance, and destruction by Constantine. The original of the Druids. The times of their religious assemblies. "In process of time," *Genes. iv.* what meant by it. The seventh day, whether kept from the beginning. The ministers of religion, who. The priesthood of the first-born. In what cases exercised by younger sons. The state of religion successively under the several patriarchs. The condition of it in Adam's family. The sacrifices of Cain and Abel, and their different success, whence. Seth, his great learning and piety. The face of the church in the time of Enos. What meant by "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." No idolatry before the flood. The sons of God, who. The great corruption of religion in the time of Jared. Enoch's piety, and walking with God. His translation, what. The incomparable sanctity of Noah, and his strictness in an evil age. The character of the men of that time. His preservation from the deluge. God's covenant with him. Shem or Japhet, whether the elder brother. The confusion of languages, when, and why. Abraham's idolatry and conversion. His eminency for religion noted in the several instances of it. God's covenant with him concerning the Messiah. The piety of Isaac and Jacob. Jacob's blessing the twelve tribes, and foretelling the Messiah.

B

2 THE PATRIARCHAL DISPENSATION.

Patriarchs extraordinary under this dispensation. Melchisedek, who: wherein a type of Christ. Job, his name, country, kindred, quality, religion, sufferings; when he lived. A reflection upon the religion of the old world, and its agreement with Christianity.

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past to the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.”^a For having created man for the noblest purposes, to love, serve, and enjoy his Maker, he was careful in all ages, by various revelations of his will, to acquaint him with the notices of his duty, and to “shew him what was good, and what the Lord did require of him;” till all other methods proving weak and ineffectual for the recovery and the happiness of human nature, God was pleased to crown all the former dispensations with the revelation of his Son. There is among the Jews an ancient tradition of the house of Elias,^b that the world should last six thousand years, which they thus compute, *המשיח שני אלפים*, *תהיו שני אלפים תהיה ושני אלפים יסורו*, “two thousand years empty, (little being recorded of those first ages of the world,) two thousand years the Law, and two thousand the days of the Messiah:” a tradition which, if it minister to no other purposes, does yet afford us a very convenient division of the several ages and periods of the church, which may be considered under a three-fold economy, the Patriarchal, Mosaical, and Evangelical dispensation. A short view of the two former will give us great advantage to survey the latter, that new and better dispensation which God has made to the world.

II. The Patriarchal age, *ימי רצון*, as the Jews call it, “the days of emptiness,” commenced from the beginning of the world, and lasted till the delivery of the law upon mount Sinai. And under this state the laws which God gave for the exercise of religion and the government of his church, were either natural or positive. Natural laws are those innate notions and principles, whether speculative or practical, with which every man is born into the world, those common sentiments of virtue and religion, those *principia justi et decori*, principles of fit and right, that naturally are upon the minds of men, and are obvious to their reason at first sight, commanding what is just and honest, and forbidding what

^a Heb. i. 1, 2.

^b Talm. Tract. Sanhedr. cap. Halec. et alibi. Vide Manass. Ben. Isr. de Resurrect. l. iii. c. 3. et Concil. Quæst. 30. in Genes.

is evil and uncomely ; and that not only in the general, that what is good is to be embraced, and what is evil to be avoided ; but in the particular instances of duty, according to their conformity or repugnancy to natural light, being conversant about those things that do not derive their value and authority from any arbitrary constitutions, but from the moral and intrinsic nature of the things themselves. These laws, as being the results and dictates of right reason, are, especially as to their first and more immediate emanations, the same in all men in the world, and in all times and places, שנתפרסמו בכל אומות ומצות, as the Jews call them, “precepts that are evident among all nations ;” indeed they are interwoven into men’s nature, inserted into the texture and constitution of their minds, and do discover themselves as soon as ever they arrive to the free use and exercise of their reason. That there are such laws and principles naturally planted in men’s breasts, is evident from the consent of mankind, and the common experience of the world. Whence else comes it to pass, that all wicked men, even among the heathens themselves, after the commission of gross sins, such as do more sensibly rouse and awaken conscience, are filled with horrors and fears of punishment ? but because they are conscious to themselves of having violated some law and rule of duty. Now what law can this be ? Not the written and revealed law, for this the heathens never had ; it must be, therefore, the inbred law of nature that is born with them, and fixed in their minds antecedently to any external revelation. “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature”^c (by the light and evidence, by the force and tendency of their natural notions and dictates) “the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts,” λογισμοί, the reasonings of their minds, “in the meanwhile” (μεταξὺ ἀλλήλων, by turns) “accusing or else excusing one another ;” that is, although they had not a written law, as the Jews had of old, and we Christians have at this day, yet by the help of their natural principles they performed the same actions, and discharged the same duties that are contained in and commanded by the written and external law, shewing by their practices that they had a law (some common notions of good and evil) written in their hearts. And to this their very consciences

^c Rom. ii. 14, 15.

bear witness, for according as they either observe or break these natural laws, their consciences do either acquit or condemn them. Hence we find God, in the very infancy of the world, appealing to Cain for the truth of this, as a thing sufficiently plain and obvious, "Why art thou wrath, and why is thy countenance fallen :^d if thou doest well shalt thou not be accepted," שָׂאָה, "be lift up?" able to walk with a pleased and cheerful countenance, the great indication of a mind satisfied in the conscience of its duty : "but if thou doest not well, sin lies at the door ;" the punishments of sin will be ready to follow thee, and conscience, as a minister of vengeance, will perpetually pursue and haunt thee. By these laws mankind was principally governed in the first ages of the world, there being for near two thousand years no other fixed and standing rule of duty than the dictates of this law of nature ; those principles of vice and virtue, of justice and honesty, that are written in the heart of every man.

III. The Jews very frequently tell us of some particular commands to the number of seven, which they call מצוות בני נח,^e "the precepts of the sons of Noah," six whereof were given to Adam and his children, and the seventh given to Noah, which they thus reckon up. The first was על עבדת זרה, "concerning strange worship," that they should not give divine honour to idols, or the gods of the heathens, answerable to the two first commands of the decalogue, "Thou shalt have no other gods but me ; thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth ; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, or serve them : for," &c. From the violation of this law it was that Job, one of the patriarchs that lived under this dispensation, solemnly purges himself, when speaking concerning the worship of the celestial lights, the great, if not only, idolatry of those early ages, says he,^f "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in her brightness, and my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand, this also were iniquity to be punished by the judge, for I should have denied the God that is above." The second, דשם

^d Gen. iv. 6, 7.

^e Gem. Babyl. Tit. Sanhedr. c. vii. fol. 56. Maimon. Tr. Melak. c. ix. et alibi passim apud Judæos. Vid. Selden. de Jur. nat. et gent. l. i. c. 10. et de Synedr. vol. i. c. 2.

^f Job xxxi. 26, 27, 28.

על ברכו, "concerning blessing," or worshipping, that they should not blaspheme the name of God. This law Job also had respect to, when he was careful to sanctify his children, and to propitiate the Divine Majesty for them every morning, "for it may be (said he ^g) that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." The third was על שפוקרו דמים, "concerning the shedding of blood," forbidding manslaughter; a law expressly renewed to Noah after the flood, and which possibly Job aimed at when he vindicates himself,^h that "he had not rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated him, or lift up himself when evil found him." Nor was all effusion of human blood forbidden by this law, capital punishments being in some cases necessary for the preservation of human society, but only that no man should shed the blood of an innocent person, or pursue a private revenge without the warrant of public authority. The fourth was גלוי ערוה, על, "concerning the disclosing of uncleanness," against filthiness and adultery, unlawful marriages and incestuous mixtures: "If mine heart (says Job in his apologyⁱ) hath been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door; then let my wife grind, &c.: for this is an heinous crime, yea it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges." The fifth was על הגנל, "concerning theft" and rapine, the invading another man's right and property, the violation of bargains and compacts, the falsifying a man's word and promise, the deceiving of another by fraud, lying, or any evil arts. From all which Job justifies himself,^k that "he had not walked with vanity, nor had his foot hasted to deceit; that his step had not turned out of the way, nor his heart walked after his eyes, nor any blot cleaved to his hands." And elsewhere he bewails it as the great iniquity of the times,^l that "there were some that removed the land-marks; that violently took away the flocks, and fed thereof; that drove away the ass of the fatherless, and took the widow's ox for a pledge; that turned the needy out of the way, and made the poor of the earth hide themselves together," &c. The sixth was על הדינים, "concerning judgments," or the administration of justice, that judges and magistrates should be appointed in every place for the order and government of civil societies, the determination of causes, and executing of justice between man and man. And

^g Job i. 6.^h Ibid. xxxi. 29.ⁱ Ibid. 9, 10, 11.^k Ibid. 5. 7.^l Ibid. xxiv. 2, 3, 4, &c.

that such there then were, seems evident from the עַן פִּלְלִי, which Job twice speaks of in one chapter,^m “the judged iniquity,” which the Jews expound, and we truly render, “an iniquity to be punished by the judges.” The seventh, עַל אֲכָר מִן הָדָו, “concerning the member of any live creature;” that is, as God expresses it in the precept to Noah,ⁿ they might not “eat the blood, or the flesh with the life thereof.” Whether these precepts were by any solemn and external promulgation particularly delivered to the antediluvian patriarchs, (as the Jews seem to contend,) I will not say: for my part, I cannot but look upon them (the last only excepted) as a considerable part of nature’s statute-law, as comprising the great strokes and lineaments of those natural dictates that are imprinted upon the souls of men. For what more comely and reasonable, and more agreeable to the first notions of our minds, than that we should worship and adore God alone, as the author of our beings, and the fountain of our happiness, and not derive the lustre of his incommunicable perfections upon any creature; that we should entertain great and honourable thoughts of God, and such as become the grandeur and majesty of his being; that we should abstain from doing any wrong or injury to another, from invading his right, violating his privileges, and much more from making any attempt upon his life, the dearest blessing in this world; that we should be just and fair in our transactions, and “do to all men as we would they should do to us;” that we should live chastely and temperately, and not by wild and extravagant lusts and sensualities offend against the natural modesty of our minds; that order and government should be maintained in the world, justice advanced, and every man secured in his just possessions? And so suitable did these laws seem to the reason and understandings of men, that the Jews, though the most zealous people under heaven of their legal institutions, received those Gentiles who observed them as proselytes into their church, though they did not oblige themselves to circumcision, and the rest of the Mosaic rites. Nay, in the first age of Christianity, when the great controversy arose between the Jewish and Gentile converts about the obligation of the law of Moses as necessary to salvation, the observation only of these precepts, at least a great part of them, was imposed upon the Gentile

^m Chap. xxxi. 11. 28.ⁿ Gen. ix. 4.

converts, as the best expedient to end the difference, by the apostolical synod at Jerusalem.

IV. But though the law of nature was the common law by which God then principally governed the world, yet was not he wanting, by methods extraordinary, to supply, as occasion was, the exigencies and necessities of his church, communicating his mind to them by dreams and visions, and other ways of revelation, which we shall more particularly remark when we come to the Mossaical economy. Hence arose those positive laws which we meet with in this period of the church, some whereof are more expressly recorded, others more obscurely intimated. Among those that are more plain and obvious, two are especially considerable, the prohibition for not eating blood, and the precept of circumcision; the one given to Noah, the other to Abraham. The prohibition concerning blood is thus recorded: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you: but flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."^o The blood is the *vehiculum* to carry the spirits, as the veins are the channels to convey the blood; now the animal spirits give vital heat and activity to every part, and being let out, the blood presently cools, and the creature dies. "Not flesh with the blood, which is the life thereof;" that is, not flesh while it is alive, while the blood and the spirits are yet in it. The mystery and signification whereof was no other than this: that God would not have men trained to arts of cruelty, or whatever did but carry the colour and aspect of a merciless and a savage temper, lest severity towards beasts should degenerate into fierceness towards men. It is good to defend the out-guards, and to stop the remotest ways that lead towards sin, especially considering the violent propensions of human nature to passion and revenge. Men commence bloody and inhuman by degrees, and little approaches in time render a thing, in itself abhorrent, not only familiar, but delightful. The Romans, who at first entertained the people in the amphitheatre only with wild beasts killing one another, came afterwards wantonly to sport away the lives of the gladiators, yea, to cast persons to be devoured by bears and lions, for no other end than the divertisement and pleasure of the people. He who can please himself in tearing and eating the parts of a living creature, may in short time make no scruple

^o Gen. ix. 3. 4.

to do violence to the life of man.^p Besides, eating blood naturally begets a savage temper, makes the spirits rank and fiery, and apt to be easily inflamed and blown up into choler and fierceness. And that hereby God did design to bar out ferity, and to secure mercy and gentleness, is evident from what follows after :^q “ And surely your blood of your lives will I require ; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man ; at the hand of every man’s brother will I require the life of man : whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.” The life of a beast might not be wantonly sacrificed to men’s humours, therefore not man’s ; the life of man being so sacred and dear to God, that if killed by a beast, the beast itself was to die for it ; if by man, that man’s life was to go for retaliation, “ by man shall his blood be shed ;” where, by “ man,” we must necessarily understand the ordinary judge and magistrate, or בֵּית דִּין שֶׁל מָרוֹ, as the Jews call it, “ the lower judicature,” with respect to that divine and superior court, the immediate judgment of God himself : by which means God admirably provided for the safety and security of man’s life, and for the order and welfare of human society : and it was no more than necessary, the remembrance of the violence and oppression of the Nephilim, or giants, before the flood, being yet fresh in memory, and there was no doubt but such “ mighty hunters,” men of robust bodies, of barbarous and inhuman tempers, would afterwards arise. This law against eating blood was afterwards renewed under the Mosaic institution, but with this peculiar signification,^r “ For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls ; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul :” that is, the blood might not be eaten, not only for the former reason, but because God had designed it for particular purposes, to be the great instrument of expiation, and an eminent type of the blood of the Son of God, who was to die as the great expiatory sacrifice for the world : nay, it was re-established by the apostles in the infancy of Christianity, and observed by the primitive Christians for several ages, as we have elsewhere observed.

V. The other precept was concerning circumcision, given to Abraham at the time of God’s entering into covenant with him.

^p Vid, Porphy. de Abstin. lib. i. s. 47.

^q Gen. ix. 5, 6.

^r Levit. xviii. 11.

“God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant, &c. This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised: and ye shall circumcise the flesh of your fore-skin, and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.”* God had now made a covenant with Abraham to take his posterity for his peculiar people, and that out of them should arise the promised Messiah: and as all federal compacts have some solemn and external rites of ratification, so God was pleased to add circumcision as the sign and seal of this covenant, partly as it had a peculiar fitness in it to denote the promised seed, partly that it might be a discriminating badge of Abraham’s children (that part whom God had especially chosen out of the rest of mankind) from all other people. On Abraham’s part, it was a sufficient argument of his hearty compliance with the terms of this covenant, that he would so cheerfully submit to so unpleasing and difficult a sign as was imposed upon him. For circumcision could not but be both painful and dangerous in one of his years, as it was afterwards to be to all new-born infants: whence Zipporah complained of Moses commanding her to circumcise her son, that he was חתן דמים, “an husband of blood,” a cruel and inhuman husband. And this, the Jews tell us,[†] was the reason why circumcision was omitted during their forty years’ journey in the wilderness, it was משום חולשתי ואורחתי, “by reason of the trouble and inconvenience of the way,” God mercifully dispensing with the want of it, lest it should hinder their travelling, the soreness and weakness of the circumcised person not comporting with hard and continual journeys. It was to be administered the eighth day;[‡] not sooner, the tenderness of the infant not well till then complying with it, besides that the mother of a male child was reckoned legally impure till the seventh day: not later, probably because the longer it was deferred, the more unwilling would parents be to put their children to pain, of which they would every day become more sensible, not to say the satisfaction it would be to them to see their children solemnly entered into covenant. Circumcision was afterwards incorporated into the body of the Jewish law, and entertained with a mighty veneration, as their great and standing privilege,

* Gen. xvii. 9, 10, 11.

† Talm. Tract. Job. c. 8.

‡ Vid. Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. par. iii. c. 49.

relied on as the main basis and foundation of their confidence, and hopes of acceptance with heaven, and accounted in a manner equivalent to all the other rites of the Mosaic law.

VI. But besides these two, we find other positive precepts, which, though not so clearly expressed, are yet sufficiently intimated to us. Thus there seems to have been a law, that none of the holy line, none of the posterity of Seth, should marry with infidels, or those corrupt and idolatrous nations which God had rejected, as appears in that it is charged as a great part of the sin of the old world,^w that the sons of God matched with the daughters of men, as also from the great care which Abraham took that his son Isaac should not take a wife of the daughters of the Canaanites among whom he dwelt. There was also מצוה ירום, *Jus Leviratus*, whereby the next brother to him who died without issue was obliged to marry the widow of the deceased, and "to raise up seed unto his brother," the contempt whereof cost Onan his life: together with many more particular laws which the story of those times might suggest to us. But what is of most use and importance to us, is to observe what laws God gave for the administration of his worship, which will be best known by considering what worship generally prevailed in those early times; wherein we shall especially remark the nature of their public worship, the places where, the times when, and the persons by whom it was administered.

VII. It cannot be doubted, but that the holy patriarchs of those days were careful to instruct their children, and all that were under their charge, (their families being then very vast and numerous,) in the duties of religion, to explain and improve the natural laws written upon their minds, and acquaint them with those divine traditions and positive revelations which they themselves had received from God: this being part of that great character which God gave of Abraham,^x "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." To this they joined prayer and invocation, than which no duty is more natural and necessary; more natural, because it fitly expresses that great reverence and veneration which we have for the Divine Majesty, and that propensity that is in mankind to make known their wants: none more necessary, because our

^w Gen. vi. 2, 3.

^x Gen. xviii. 19.

whole dependence being upon the continuance and constant returns of the divine power and goodness, it is most reasonable that we should make our daily addresses to him, "in whom we live, move, and have our being." Nor were they wanting in returns of praise and solemn celebrations of the goodness of heaven, both by entertaining high and venerable thoughts of God, and by actions suitable to those honourable sentiments which they had of him. In these acts of worship they were careful to use gestures of the greatest reverence and submission, which commonly was prostration. "Abraham bowed himself towards the ground:"^y and when God sent the Israelites the happy news of their deliverance out of Egypt, "they bowed their heads and worshipped:"^z a posture which hath ever been the usual mode of adoration in those Eastern countries unto this day. But the greatest instance of the public worship in those times was sacrifices: a very early piece of devotion, in all probability taking its rise from Adam's fall. They were either eucharistical, expressions of thankfulness for blessings received, or expiatory, offered for the remission of sin. Whether these sacrifices were first taken up at men's arbitrary pleasure, or positively instituted and commanded by God, might admit of a very large inquiry. But to me the case seems plainly this:^a that as to eucharistical sacrifices, such as first-fruits, and the like oblations, men's own reason might suggest and persuade them, that it was fit to present them as the most natural significations of a thankful mind. And thus far there might be sacrifices in the state of innocence: for man being created under such excellent circumstances as he was in Paradise, could not but know that he owed to God all possible gratitude and subjection; obedience he owed him as his supreme Lord and Master, gratitude, as his great Patron and Benefactor, and was therefore obliged to pay to him some eucharistical sacrifices, as a testimony of his grateful acknowledgment, that he had both his being and preservation from him. But when sin had changed the scene, and mankind was sunk under a state of guilt, he was then to seek for a way how to pacify God's anger: and this was done by bloody and expiatory sacrifices, which God accepted in the sinner's stead. And as to these, it seems reasonable to suppose

^y Gen. xviii. 2.

^z Exod. iv. 31.

^a Vid. Chrysost. Hom. xviii. in Gen. a. 4. vol. iv. p. 156.

that they should be founded upon a positive institution, because pardon of sin being a matter of pure grace and favour, whatever was a means to signify and convey that, must be appointed by God himself, first revealed to Adam, and by him communicated to his children. The Deity, propitiated by these atonements, was wont to testify his acceptance of them by some external and visible sign: thus Cain sensibly perceived that God had respect to Abel's sacrifice, and not to his; though what this sign was, it is not easy to determine. Most probably it was fire from heaven coming down upon the oblation, and consuming it: for so it frequently was in the sacrifices of the Mosaic dispensation, and so we find it was in that famous sacrifice of Abraham,^b "a lamp of fire passed between the parts of the sacrifice." Thus when it is said, "God had respect to Abel and to his offering," Theodotion renders it *ἐνεπύρισεν*, "he burnt it;" and to this custom the psalmist alludes in that petition,^c "Remember all thy offerings, and accept thy burnt sacrifice," *יִשְׁמְרֵה וְעֹלֹתֶיךָ*, "let thy burnt-offering be reduced into ashes."

VIII. Where it was that this public worship was performed, is next to be inquired into. That they had fixed and determinate places for the discharge of their religious duties, those especially that were done in common, is greatly probable; nature and the reason of things would put them upon it. And this most think is intended in that phrase, where it is said of Cain and Abel, that "they brought their oblations," that is, (as Aben Ezra^d and others expound it,) *אֶל מְקוֹם שֶׁקָּבַץ לְהַבְלִיתוֹ*, "to the place set apart for divine worship." And this probably was the reason why Cain, though vexed to the heart to see his brother preferred before him, did not presently set upon him, the solemnity and religion of the place, and the sensible appearances of the Divine Majesty having struck an awe into him, but deferred his murderous intentions till they came into the field, and there fell upon him. For their sacrifices they had altars, whereon they offered them, contemporary no doubt with sacrifices themselves, though we read not of them till after the flood, when Noah built an altar unto the Lord,^e and offered burnt-offerings upon it: so Abraham,^f immediately after his being called to the worship of the true God, in Sichem built an altar unto the Lord, who ap-

^b Gen. xv. 17.^c Psalm xx. 3.^d Apud. P. Fag. in Gen. iv.^e Gen. viii. 20.^f Gen. xii. 7, 8. vide cap. xiii. 4. 18.

peared unto him; and removing thence to a mountain eastward, he built another altar, and called on the name of the Lord, as indeed he did almost in every place where he came. Thus also when he dwelt at Beersheba in the plains of Mamre,^g he "planted a grove there, and called on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God." This no doubt was the common chapel or oratory, whither Abraham and his numerous family, and probably those whom he gained to be proselytes to his religion, were wont to retire for their public adorations, as a place infinitely advantageous for such religious purposes. And indeed the ancient devotion of the world much delighted in groves, in woods, and mountains, partly for the convenience of such places, as better composing the thoughts for divine contemplations, and resounding their joint-praises of God to the best advantage, partly because the silence and retiredness of the place was apt to beget a kind of sacred dread and horror in the mind of the worshipper. Hence we find in Ophrah,^h where Gideon's father dwelt, an altar to Baal, and a grove that was by it; and how common the superstitions and idolatries of the heathen world were in groves and high places, no man can be ignorant, that is never so little conversant either in profane or sacred stories. For this reason, that they were so much abused to idolatry, God commanded the Israelites to "destroy their altars, break down their images, and cut down their groves:"ⁱ and that "they should not plant a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord,"^j lest he should seem to countenance what was so universally prostituted to false worship and idolatry. But to return to Abraham. He "planted a grove," אֵשֶׁל, "a tree," which the ancients generally make to have been a large spreading oak; and some foundation there is for it in the sacred text; for the place where Abraham planted it is called "the plain of Mamre;"^k or, as in the Hebrew, he dwelt מִמְרָה, "among the oaks of Mamre;"^l and so the Syriac renders it, "the house of the oak:" the name whereof, Josephus tells us,^m was Ogyges; and it is not a conjecture to be despised,ⁿ that Noah might pro-

^g Gen. xxi. 33.^h Judg. vi. 25.ⁱ Exod. xxxiv. 13.^j Deut. xvi. 21.^k Gen. xiii. 18.^l Παρά τῆς δρυὸς τῆς Μαρμάρης. LXX. Ita Vers. Samaritana: nec aliter Arabs in Genes. xviii. 1.^m Antiq. Jud. l. i. c. 11.ⁿ Vid. Dick. Delph. Phœnic. c. 12. p. 137. et Append. p. 38.

bably inhabit in this place, and either give the name to it, or at least derive his from it, Ogyges being the name by which he is usually described in foreign writers. This very oak, St. Jerome assures us,^o and Eusebius intimates as much,^p was yet standing till the time of Constantine, and worshipped with great superstition. And Sozomen tells us more particularly,^q that there was a famous mart held there every summer, and a feast celebrated by a general confluence of the neighbouring countries, and persons of all religions, both Christians, Jews, and Gentiles, *προσφόρως δὲ ταῖς θρησκειαῖς τιμῶσι τοῦτον τὸν χῶρον*, every one doing honour to this place according to the different principles of their religion;" but that Constantine, being offended that the place should be profaned with the superstitions of the Jews and the idolatry of the Gentiles, wrote with some severity to Macarius the bishop of Jerusalem, and the bishops of Palestine, that they should destroy the altars and images, and deface all monuments of idolatry, and restore the place to its ancient sanctity: which was accordingly done, and a church erected in the place, where God was purely and sincerely worshipped. From this oak, the ordinary place of Abraham's worship and devotion, the religion of the Gentiles doubtless derived its oaks and groves; and particularly the Druids, the great and almost only masters and directors of all learning and religion among the ancient Britons, hence borrowed their original; who are so notoriously known to have lived wholly under oaks and in groves, and there to have delivered their doctrines and precepts, and to have exercised their religious and mysterious rites, that hence they fetched their denomination, either from *Δρῦς*, (as the ancients generally thought,) or, more probably, from the old Celtic word *Deru*, both signifying "an oak," and which the Welch, the descendants of the ancient Britons, still call *Derw* at this day. But of this enough.

IX. From the place where, we proceed to the times when they usually paid their devotions. And seeing order is necessary in all undertakings, and much more in the actions of religion, we cannot think that mankind was left at a roving uncertainty in a matter of so great importance, but that they had their stated and solemn times of worship: especially when we

^o De loc. Hebr. in voce Arboch.

^p Euseb. *περ. τοπικ. ὀνομ.* in voc. Ἀρκά.

^q Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 4.

find among all nations, even the most rude and unpolished heathens, times peculiarly set apart for the honour of their gods, and the public solemnities of religion. And so, no question, it was in the more early ages of the world; they had fixed and appropriate seasons, when they met together to do homage unto God, and to offer up their joint acknowledgments to heaven. Thus we read of Cain, that he brought his oblation "in process of time," *מִמָּוֶלַח יָמָיו*, "at the end of days," at one of those fixed and periodical returns, when they used to meet in the religious assemblies, the word *וְעַתָּה* denoting not simply an end, but a determinate and an appointed end. I know many with great zeal and eagerness contend, that the sabbath, or seventh day from the creation, was set apart, and universally observed as the time of public worship, and that from the beginning of the world. But, alas, the foundation upon which this opinion is built, is very weak and sandy, having nothing to rely on, but one place, where it is said, that "God resting the seventh day from all his works, blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it:"^a which words are reasonably thought to have been set down by Moses by way of prolepsis, as it was in his time, if they relate at all to the sabbath, and are not rather to be understood of God's blessing and sanctifying the seventh day, as having then completed all his works in the creating of man, and in whom, as in the crown and glory of the creation, he would sanctify himself. For that it should be meant of a weekly sabbath, hath as little countenance from this text, as it hath from the practice of those times, there being no footsteps or shadow of any such sabbath kept through all the patriarchal periods of the church, till the times of Moses, which, besides the evidence of the story, is universally owned by the ancient Jews, and very many of the fathers do expressly assert it.

X. The last circumstance concerns the persons by whom the public worship was administered. Impossible it is that any society should be regularly managed, where there are not some peculiar persons to superintend, direct, and govern the affairs of it. And God, who in all other things is a God of order, is much more so in matters of religion; and therefore, no doubt, from the beginning appointed those, whose care and business it should be to discharge the public parts of piety and devotion in the name of the rest. Now the priesthood in those times was vested in

^a Gen. iv. 3.

^a Gen. ii. 3.

the heads of tribes, and in the first-born of every family. To the patriarch, or head of every tribe, it belonged to bless the family, to offer sacrifice, to intercede for them by prayer, and to minister in other solemn acts of religion. And this office hereditarily descended to the first-born, who had power to discharge it during the life of his father; for it was not necessary that he who was priest by virtue of his primogeniture, should be also the eldest of the house. Jacob, who succeeded in his brother's right, offered sacrifices in the life of his father Isaac; and Abraham was a priest, though Shem, the head of the family, and ten degrees removed from him in a direct line, was then alive, yea survived Abraham (as some learned men think) near forty years. Every first-born had three great prerogatives: a double portion of the paternal inheritance; a lordship and principality over his brethren; and a right to the priesthood, to instruct them in the knowledge of divine things, and to manage the common offices of religion. So that in those times there was a particular priesthood in every family, the administration whereof was usually appropriate to the first-born. Thus Noah, Abraham, and Isaac offered sacrifices; and Job, (who lived about that time, or not long after,) both for his children and his friends. Thus Esau was a priest by his primogeniture; and that goodly raiment of her son Esau, which Rebekah put upon Jacob when he went in to his father, is by many not improbably understood of the sacerdotal vestments, wherein, as first-born, he was wont to execute his office. Of these priests we are to understand that place, "Let the priests, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves."¹ This could not be meant of the Levitical priests, (the Aaronical order not being yet instituted,) and therefore must be understood of the priesthood of the first-born, and so Solomon Jarchi's gloss expounds it. Thus when Moses had built an altar at the foot of the mountain, he sent "young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings unto the Lord."² Where, for "young men," the Chaldee Paraphrase and the Jerusalem Targum have *שׂוֹמְרֵי בְּרִית*, בְּרִית בְּנֵי, "the first-born of the children of Israel;" so has that of Jonathan, who expressly adds this reason, "for unto that very hour the worship remained among the first-born, the tabernacle of the covenant not being yet made, nor the Aaronical priest-

¹ Exod. xix. 22.² Exod. xxiv. 5.

hood set up." So when Jacob bequeathed his blessing to Reuben, "Reuben, thou art my first-born, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power,"^w the same Jewish paraphrasts tell us, that there were three things in this blessing conveyed and confirmed to Reuben, the birthright, the kingdom, and the priesthood, but that for his enormous and unnatural sin they were transferred to others; the primogeniture to Joseph, the kingdom to Judah, and the priesthood to Levi. But though the sacerdotal function ordinarily belonged to the first-born, yet was it not so wholly invested in them, but that it might in some cases be exercised by younger brothers, especially when passing into other families, and themselves becoming heads of tribes and families. Abraham we know was not a first-born, and it is highly probable that Shem himself was not Noah's eldest son. Moses was a priest, yea, כהן הכהנים, as the Jews call him, "the priest of priests," and yet was but Amram's second son, and Aaron's younger brother. So that the case, in short, seemed to lie thus; the patriarch, or surviving head of every tribe, was a kind of high-priest over all the families that were descended from him; the first-born in every family was the ordinary priest, who might officiate in his father's stead, and who, after his decease, succeeded in his room; the younger brethren, when leaving their father's house, and themselves becoming heads of families, and their seats removed too far distant to make use of the ordinary priesthood, did themselves take the office upon them, and exercise it over all those that were under them, and sprung from them, though the main honour and dignity was reserved for the priesthood of the first-born. Thus Abraham, though but a second son, yet when become the head of a great family, and removed into another country, became a priest, and that not only during the life of his father, but of Shem himself, the grand surviving patriarch of that time. I observe no more concerning this, than that this right of the first-born was a prime honour and privilege; and therefore the reason (say the Jews^x) why Jacob was so greatly desirous of the birthright was because, in those days, the priesthood was entailed upon it. And for this chiefly, no doubt, it was that Esau is called βέβηλος,^y "a profane person," for selling

^w Gen. xlix. 3.

^x Beresch. Rab. fol. 17. col. 1. ap. Selden. de success. ad leg. Ebr. c. 5. ^y Heb. xii. 16.

his birthright for a mess of pottage, because thereby he made so light of the sacred honour of the priesthood, the venerable office of ministering before God.

II. Having thus seen what were the laws, what the worship of those times, it remains briefly to consider what was the face of the church, and the state of religion under the several patriarchs of this economy. Not to meddle with the story either of the creation or apostacy of Adam, no sooner was he fallen from that innocent and happy state wherein God had placed him, but conscience began to stir, and he was sensible that God was angry, and saw it necessary to propitiate the offended Deity by prayer and invocation, by sorrow and repentance, and, probably, by offering sacrifice; a conjecture that hath at least some countenance from those "coats of skins"^z where-with God clothed our first parents, which seem likely to have been the skins of beasts slain for sacrifice; for that they were not killed for food is evident, because flesh was not the ordinary diet (if it was at all) of those first ages of the world. And God might purposely make choice of this sort of covering, to put our first parents in mind of their great degeneracy, how deep they were sunk into the animal life, and, by gratifying brutish and sensual appetites at so dear a rate, how like they were become to the beasts that perish. And if this were so, it possibly might give birth to that law of Moses,^a that every priest that offered any man's burnt-offering should have to himself the skin of the burnt-offering which he had offered. But however this was, it is certain that Adam was careful to instruct his children in the knowledge of divine things, and to maintain religion and the worship of God in his family. For we find Cain and Abel bringing their oblations, and that at a certain time, though they had a different success. I omit the traditions of the East, that the cause of the difference between Cain and Abel was about a wife, and that they sought to decide the case by sacrifice; and that when Abel's sacrifice was accepted, Cain, out of envy and indignation, fell upon his brother, struck his head with a stone, and slew him. The present they brought was according to their different ways and institutions of life: Cain, as an husbandman, "brought of the fruit of the ground;" Abel, as a shepherd, "brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof:" but

^z Gen. iii. 21.

^a Levit. vii. 8.

the one was accepted, and the other rejected. The cause whereof certainly was, not that the one was little and inconsiderable, the other large and noble; the one only a dry oblation, the other a burnt-offering; or that Cain had entertained a conceived prejudice against his brother; the true cause lay in the different temper and disposition of their minds.^b Abel had great and honourable thoughts of God, and therefore brought of the best that he had; Cain, mean and unworthy apprehensions, and accordingly took what came first to hand: Abel came with a grateful sense of the goodness of heaven, with a mind piously and heartily devoted to the divine majesty, and an humble reliance upon the divine acceptance; Cain brought his oblation, indeed, but looked no farther, was not careful to offer up himself “a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God,” as being “the most reasonable service,” too confidently bearing up himself, as we may suppose, upon the prerogative of primogeniture. By which means, Abel “offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts.”^c For “he had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.”^d And if in that fire by which God testified his respect by consuming one oblation and not the other, there was (as the Jews say) seen the face of a lion, it doubtless prefigured the late promised Messiah, “the Lion of the tribe of Judah,”^e our great expiatory sacrifice, of whom all other sacrifices were but types and shadows, and in whom all our oblations are rendered grateful unto God, “the odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing unto God.”^f

XII. Abel being taken away by his envious and enraged brother, God was pleased to repair the loss by giving his parents another son whom they called Seth, and he accordingly proved a very virtuous and religious man. He was (if we may believe the ancients) a great scholar; the first inventor of letters and writing, an accurate astronomer, and taught his children the knowledge of the stars; who having heard from their grandfather Adam, that the world was to be twice destroyed, once by fire, and again by water, (if the story be true which Josephus without any great warrant reports,^g) wrote their experiments

^b Chrys. Hom. xviii. in Genes. s. 5. vol. iv. p. 157.

^c Heb. xi. 4.

^d Gen. iv. 4, 5.

^e Rev. v. 5.

^f Phil. iv. 18.

^g Antiq. Jnd. l. i. c. 3.

and the principles of their art upon two pillars, one of brick, the other of stone, that if the one perished, the other might remain and convey their notions to posterity; one of which pillars, Josephus adds, was said to be standing in Syria in his time. But that which rendered Seth most renowned, was his piety and devotion; a good man he was, one who asserted and propagated religion and the true worship of God, as he had received it from his father Adam, notwithstanding the declensions and degeneracy, and possibly oppositions of his brother Cain and his party. The Eastern writers, both Jews and Arabians,^h confidently assure us that Seth and his retinue withdrew from Cain, who dwelt in the valley where he had killed his brother Abel, into a very high mountain, (on the top whereof their father Adam was buried,) so high, if we could believe them, that they could hear the angels singing anthems, and did daily join in with that heavenly choir. Here they wholly devoted themselves to the daily worship of God, and obtained a mighty name and veneration for the holiness and purity of their lives. When Seth came to lie upon his death-bed, he summoned his children, their wives and families together, blessed them, and as his last will commanded them to worship God, adjuring them, by the blood of Abel, (their usual and solemn oath,) that they should not descend from the holy mount to hold any correspondence or commerce with Cain or his wicked faction; and then breathed his last. A command, say my authors, which they observed for seven generations, and then came in the promiscuous mixtures.

XIII. To Seth succeeded his son Enos, who kept up the glory and purity of religion and the honour of the holy line. Of his time it is particularly recorded,ⁱ "then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." The ambiguity of the word *קרא*, signifying sometimes to *profane*, sometimes to *begin*, hath begotten various apprehensions among learned men concerning this place, and led them not only into different, but quite contrary senses. The words are by some rendered thus, "then men profaned in calling upon the name of the Lord," which they thus explain: that at that time, when Enos was born, the true worship and service of God began to sink and fail, corruption and idolatry mightily prevailing by-reason of Cain's wicked and apostate family; and

^h Vid. testimonia eorum citat. ap. Hotting. Smeg. Orient. c. 8. p. 226. et seq.

ⁱ Gen. iv. 26.

that, as a sad memorial of this corrupt and degenerate age, holy Seth called his son's name Enos, which not only simply signifies a man, but a poor, calamitous, miserable man. And this way go many of the Jews, and some Christian writers of great name and note. Nay, Maimonides, one of the wisest and soberest of all the Jewish writers, begins his tract about idolatry,^k בְּיַם אֵנוֹשׁ, "from the times of Enos," referring to this very passage; he tells us, that men did then grievously err, and that the minds of the wise men of those days were grown gross and stupid; yea, that Enos himself was מִן הַשֹּׁמְעִים, "among those that erred;" and that their idolatry consisted in this, that they worshipped the stars and the host of heaven. Others there are who expressly assert,^l that Enos was the first that invented "images, to excite the spirit of the creatures, שִׁתְּפִלּוּ לֵאלֹהִים בְּאִמְצָעוֹתָם, that by their mediation men might invoke and call upon God." But how infirm a foundation this text is to build all this upon is evident: for besides what some have observed,^m that the Hebrew phrase is not tolerably reconcileable with such a sense, if it were, yet דַּעֲיָק חֹסֵר, as one of the Rabbins has well noted,ⁿ that there wants a foundation for any such exposition; no mention being made in Moses's story of any such false gods as were then worshipped, no footsteps of idolatry appearing in the world till after the flood. Nor, indeed, is it reasonable to suppose, that the creation of the world being yet fresh in memory, and divine traditions so lately received from Adam, and God frequently communicating himself to men, that the case being thus, men could in so short a time be fallen under so great an apostacy as wholly to forget and renounce the true God, and give divine honours to senseless and inanimate creatures; I can hardly think that the Cainites themselves should be guilty of this, much less Enos and his children. The meaning of the words then is plainly this: that in Enos's time, the holy line being greatly multiplied, they applied themselves to the worship of God in a more public and remarkable manner, either by framing themselves into more distinct societies for the exercise of public worship, or by meeting at more fixed and stated times, or by invoking God under more solemn and peculiar rites than they had done before. And this probably

^k De Idol. c. 1. s. 1.

^l Vid. ap. Hotting. Smeg. Orient. c. 8. p. 230.

^m Dionys. Voss. not. in Maimon. p. 4. Heideg. de Hist. Patr. exerc. vi. p. 223.

ⁿ R. Eliez. Maas. Beres. c. 22.

they did the rather, to obviate that torrent of profaneness and impiety which by means of the sons of Cain they saw flowing in upon the world. This will be farther confirmed, if we take the words, as by some they are rendered, "then men began to be called by the name of the Lord;" that is, the difference and separation that was between the children of Seth and Cain every day ripening into a wider distance, the posterity of Seth began to take to themselves a distinctive title, that the world might the better distinguish between those who kept to the service of God, and those who threw off religion, and let loose the reins to disorder and impiety. And hereof we meet with clear intimation in the story of those times, when we read of בני אלהים, "the sons of God," (who doubtless were the pious and devout posterity of Seth, calling themselves after the name of the Lord, whom they constantly and sincerely worshipped, notwithstanding the fancy of Josephus and the fathers that they were angels, or that of the Jewish paraphrasts that they were בני רבירים, "the sons of great men and princes;") in opposition to the בני אדם, "the sons of men," the impure and debauched posterity of Cain, who made light of religion, and were wholly governed by earthly and sensual inclinations. And the matching of these "sons of God" with the "daughters of men," that is, those of the family of Cain, and the fatal consequences of those unhappy marriages, was that which provoked God to destroy the world. I have no more to add concerning Enos, than that we are told, that dying he gave the same commands to his children which he had received of his father, that they should make religion their great care and business, and keep themselves pure from society and converse with the line of Cain.

XIV. After Enos was his son Kenan, who, as the Arabian historian informs us,^p ruled the people committed to him by a wise and excellent government, and gave the same charge at his death that had been given to him. Next Kenan comes Mahalaleel,^q who carries devotion and piety in his very name, signifying, "one that praises God," of whom they say, that he trained up the people in ways of justice and piety, blessed his children at his death, and, having charged them to separate from the Cainites, appointed his son Jared to be his successor; whose name denotes

^a Gen. vi. 2.

^p Elmacin. ap. Hotting. Smeg. Orient. c. 8. p. 233.

^q Id. *ibid.* p. 234.

a "descent," probably either because of the notable decrease and declension of piety in his time, or because in his days some of the Sethites descended from the holy mountain to mix with the posterity of Cain. For so the Oriental writers inform us,¹ that a great noise and shout coming up from the valley, an hundred of the holy mountaineers agreed to go down to the sons of Cain, whom Jared endeavoured to hinder by all the arts of counsel and persuasion. But what can stop a mind bent upon an evil course? down they went, and being ravished with the beauty of the Cainite women, promiscuously committed folly and lewdness with them; from whence sprang a race of giants, men of vast and robust bodies, but of more vicious and ungovernable tempers, who made their will their law, and might the standard and rule of equity. Attempting to return back to the holy mount, heaven had shut up their way, the stones of the mountain burning like fire when they came upon them; which whether the reader will have faith enough to believe, I know not. Jared being near his death, advised his children to be wise by the folly of their brethren, and to have nothing to do with that profane generation. His son Enoch followed in his steps, a man of admirable strictness and piety, and peculiarly exemplary for his innocent and holy conversation, it being particularly noted of him, that "he walked with God."² He set the divine majesty before him, as the guide and pattern, the spectator and rewarder of his actions; in all his ways endeavoured to approve himself to his all-seeing eye, by doing nothing but what was grateful and acceptable to him; he was the great instance of virtue and goodness in an evil age, and by the even tenor and constancy of a holy and religious life, shewed his firm belief and expectation of a future state, and his hearty dependence upon the divine goodness for the rewards of a better life. And God, who is never behindhand with his servants, crowned his extraordinary obedience with an uncommon reward. "By faith Enoch was translated, that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."³ And what that faith was, is plain by what follows after, a belief of God's being and his bounty. "Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek

¹ Elmac. et Patric. apud Hotting. c. 8. p. 235. ² Gen. v. 24. ³ Heb. xi. 5, 6.

him." What this translation was, and whither it was made, whether into that terrestrial paradise out of which Adam was expelled and banished, and whereunto Enoch had desired of God he might be translated, as some fancy ; or whether placed among the stars, as others ; or carried into the highest heavens, as others will have it, were nice and useless speculations. It is certain he was taken out of these mutable regions, and set beyond the reach of those miseries and misfortunes to which a present state of sin and mortality does betray us ; translated, probably, both soul and body, that he might be a type and specimen of a future resurrection, and a sensible demonstration to the world that there is a reward for the righteous, and another state after this wherein good men shall be happy for ever. I pass by the fancy of the Jews, as vain and frivolous, that though Enoch was a good man, yet was he very mutable and inconstant and apt to be led aside, and that this was the reason why God translated him so soon, lest he should have been debauched by the charms and allurements of a wicked world. He was an eminent prophet, and a fragment of his prophecy is yet extant in St. Jude's epistle ; by which it appears, that wickedness was then grown rampant, and the manners of men very corrupt and vicious, and that he as plainly told them of their faults, and that divine vengeance that would certainly overtake them. Of Methuselah his son nothing considerable is upon record but his great age, living full nine hundred and sixty-nine years, (the longest proportion which any of the patriarchs arrived to,) and died in that very year wherein the flood came upon the world.

XV. From his son Lamech, concerning whom we find nothing memorable, we proceed to his grandchild Noah, by the very imposition of whose name his parents presaged that he would be a refreshment and comfort to the world, and highly instrumental to remove that curse which God by an universal deluge was bringing upon the earth : " He called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed : " ^u he was one in whom his parents did acquiesce and rest satisfied, that he would be eminently useful and serviceable to the world. Indeed, he proved a person of incomparable sanctity and integrity, " a preacher of righteousness " to others, and who as care-

^u Gen. v. 29.

fully practised it himself. He “was a just man, and perfect in his generation, and he walked with God.”* He did not warp and decline with the humour of the age he lived in, but maintained his station and kept his line. “He was upright in his generation.” It is no thanks to be religious, when it is the humour and fashion of the times: the great trial is, when we live in the midst of a corrupt generation. It is the crown of virtue to be good, when there are all manner of temptations to the contrary, when the greatest part of men go the other way, when virtue and honesty are laughed and drolled on, and censured as an over-wise and affected singularity; when lust and debauchery are accounted the modes of gallantry, and pride and oppression suffered to ride in prosperous triumphs without control. Thus it was with Noah; he contended with the vices of the age, and dared to own God and religion when almost all mankind besides himself had rejected and thrown them off. For in his time wickedness openly appeared with a brazen forehead, and violence had covered the face of the earth; the promiscuous mixtures of the children of Seth and Cain had produced giants and mighty men, men strong to do evil, and who had as much will as power, *ὕβρισταὶ παῖδες, καὶ παντὸς ὑπερόπται καλοῦ διὰ τὴν δὲ τῇ δυνάμει πεποιθήσιν*, as Josephus describes them,[†] “a race of men insolent and ungovernable, scornful and injurious, and who bearing up themselves in the confidence of their own strength, despised all justice and equity, and made every thing truckle under their extravagant lusts and appetites.” The very same character does Lucian give of the men of this age, speaking of the times of Deucalion (their Noah) and the flood; *ὕβρισταὶ κάρτα ἔόντες* (says he)[‡] *ἀθέμιστα ἔργα ἔπρασσον· οὔτε γὰρ ὄρκια ἐφύλασσον, οὔτε ξενίους ἐδέχοντο, οὔτε ἱκετέων ἠνεύχοντο, ἀνθ’ ὧν σφίσι ἡ μεγάλη συμφορὴ ἀπῆκετο· αὐτίκα γὰρ ἡ γῆ πολλὸν ὕδωρ ἐκδιδοί, &c.* “Men exceedingly scornful and contumelious, and guilty of the most unrighteous and enormous actions, violating all oaths and covenants, throwing off kindness and hospitality, and rejecting all addresses and supplications made to them.” For which cause great miseries overtook them: for heaven and earth, seas and rivers, conspired together to pour out mighty floods upon the world; which swept all away, but Deucalion only, who for his

* Gen. vi. 9.

† Antiq. Jud. l. i. c. 4.

‡ De Dea Syria. vol. ii. p. 882.

prudence and piety was left to repair mankind. And so he goes on with the relation consonant to the accounts of the sacred story. This infection had spread itself over all parts, and was become so general and epidemical, that "all flesh had corrupted their ways," and scarce any besides Noah left to keep up the face of a church, and the profession of religion. Things being come to this pass, quickly alarmed the divine justice, and made the world ripe for vengeance; the patience of God was now tired out, and he resolved to make mankind feel the just effects of his incensed severity. But yet in the midst of judgment he remembers mercy: he tells them, that though he would not suffer his patience to be eternally prostituted to the wanton humours of wicked men, yet that he would bear with them an hundred and twenty years longer, in order to their reformation. So loth is God to take advantage of the sins of men, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto repentance." In the mean time righteous Noah found favour with heaven, (a good man hath a peculiar guardianship and protection in the worst of times,) and God orders him to "prepare an ark for the saving of his house." An hundred years was this ark in building, not but that it might have been finished in a far less time, but that God was willing to give them so long a space for wise and sober considerations, Noah preaching all the while, both by his doctrine and his practice, that they would break off their sins by repentance, and prevent their ruin. But "they that are filthy will be filthy still:" the hardened world persisted in their impieties, till the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost, and "destroyed the world of the ungodly." God shut up Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives, into the ark, together with provisions, and so many creatures of every sort as were sufficient, not only for food, but for reparation of the kind, (miracles must not be expected where ordinary means may be had,) and then opened the windows of heaven, and broke up the fountains of the deep, and brought in the flood that swept all away. Twelve months Noah and his family continued in this floating habitation; when the waters being gone, and the earth dried, he came forth, and the first thing he did was to erect an altar, and offer up an eucharistical sacrifice to God for so remarkable a deliverance, (some of the Jews tell us, that coming out of the ark he was bitten by a lion, and rendered

unfit for sacrifice, and that therefore Shem did it in his room;) he did not concern himself for food, or a present habitation, but immediately betook himself to his devotion. God was infinitely pleased with the pious and grateful sense of the good man, and openly declared that his displeasure was over, and that he would no more bring upon the world such effects of his severity as he had lately done, and that the ordinances of nature should duly perform their constant motions, and regularly observe their periodical revolutions. And because man was the principal creature in this lower world, he restored to him his charter of dominion and sovereignty over the creatures, and by enacting some laws against murder and cruelty, secured the peace and happiness of his life: and then established a covenant with Noah and all mankind, that he would no more drown the world; for the ratification and ensurance whereof he placed the rainbow in the clouds, as a perpetual sign and memorial of his promise. Noah after this betook himself to husbandry, and planting vineyards; and being unwarily overtaken with the fruit of the vine, became a scorn to Ham, one of his own sons, while the two others piously covered their father's shame. Awaking out of his sleep, and knowing what had been done, he prophetically cursed Ham and his posterity, blessed Shem, and in Japhet foretold the calling of the Gentiles to the worship of God and the knowledge of the Messiah; that God should "enlarge Japhet, and he should dwell in the tents of Shem." He died in the nine hundred and fiftieth year of his age, having seen both worlds, that before the flood and that which came after it.

XVI. Shem and Japhet were the two good sons of Noah, in the assigning whose primogeniture, though the scripture be not positive and decretory, yet do the most probable reasons appear for Japhet, especially if we compute their age. Shem was an hundred years old two years after the flood,^a (for then he begat Arphaxad;) now the flood happened just in the six hundredth year of Noah's age;^b whence it follows, that Shem was born when his father was five hundred and two years old. But Noah being expressly said to have begotten sons in the five hundredth year of his age,^c plain it is that there must be one son at least two years older than Shem, which could be no other than Japhet, Ham being acknowledged by all the younger brother. And

^a Gen. xi. 10.

^b Gen. vii. 11.

^c Gen. v. 32.

hence it is that Shem is called the brother,^d יפת הנחל, “of Japhet the greater,” or, as we render it, “the elder.” They were both pious and devout men, having been brought up under the religious institutions, not only of their father Noah, but their grandfather Lamech, and their great-grandfather Methuselah, who had for some hundreds of years conversed with Adam. The holy story records nothing concerning the state of religion in their days, and little heed is to be given to the Eastern writers, when they tell us of Shem, that, according to the command of his father, he took the body of Adam, which Noah had secretly hidden in the ark, and joining himself to Melchisedek, they went and buried it in the heart of the earth, an angel going before, and conducting them to the place, with a great deal more, with little truth, and to as little purpose. As for the patriarchs born after the flood, little notice is taken of them besides the bare mention of their names, Arphaxad, Salah, Eber. Of this last they say, that he was a great prophet; that he instituted schools and seminaries for the advancement and propagation of religion: and there was great reason for him to bestir himself, if it be true, what the Arabian historians tell us,^e that now idolatry began mightily to prevail, and men generally carved to themselves the images of their ancestors, to which, upon all occasions, they addressed themselves with the most solemn veneration, the demons giving answers through the images which they worshipped. Eber was the father of the Jewish nation, who from him are said to have derived the title of Hebrews, “*Εβραῖος, ἀφ’ οὗ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους Ἑβραίους ἀρχήθεν ἐκάλουν*,” as Josephus tells us,^f (though there want not those who assign other reasons of the name,) and that the Hebrew language was preserved in his family, which till his time had been the mother-tongue, and the common language of the world. To Eber succeeded his son Peleg, a name given him out of a prophetic foresight of that memorable division that happened in his time. For now it was that a company of bold daring persons, combining themselves under the conduct and command of Nimrod, resolved to erect a vast and stupendous fabric, partly to raise themselves a mighty reputation in the world, partly to secure themselves from the invasion of an after-deluge, and probably as a place of

^d Gen. x. 21.^e Elmac. et Patricid. apud Hotting. Smeg. Orient. c. 8. p. 265.^f Antiq. Jud. l. i. c. 7.

retreat and defence, the better to enable them to put in practice that oppression and tyranny which they designed to exercise over the world. But whatever it was, God was displeased with the attempt, and to shew how easily he can baffle the subtlest counsels, and in a moment subvert the firmest projects, on a sudden he confounded the language of these foolish builders, so that they were forced to desist from their vain and ambitious design, as not being able to understand and converse with one another. To Peleg succeeded his son Rehu, to Rehu Serug, to him Nachor, to Nachor Terah, who dwelt in Ur of the Chaldæans, where conversing with those idolatrous nations, he lapsed himself into the most gross idolatry. So apt are men "to follow a multitude to do evil," so fatally mischievous is ill company and a bad example. But the best way to avoid the plague, is to remove out of the house of infection. Away goes Terah to Haran, where by repentance he is said to have recovered himself out of the "snare of the devil."

XVII. Abraham, the second son of Terah, succeeds in the patriarchal line. In his minority he was educated in the idolatries of his father's house, who, they say, was a maker of statues and images: and the Jews tell us many pleasant stories of Abraham's going into the shop in the absence of his father,^s his breaking the images, and jeering those that came to buy or worship them; of his father's carrying him to Nimrod to be punished, his witty answers, and miraculous escapes. But God, who had designed him for higher and nobler purposes, called him at length out of his father's house, fully discovered himself to him, and by many solemn promises and federal compacts peculiarly engaged him to himself. He was a man entirely devoted to the honour of God, and had consecrated all his services to the interests of religion, scarce any duty either towards God or men for which he is not eminent upon record. Towards God, how great was his zeal and care to promote his worship? erecting altars almost in every place, whereon he publicly offered his prayers and sacrifice. His love to God wholly swallowed up the love and regard that he had to his dearest interests: witness his entire resignation of himself, his cheerful renouncing all the concerns of his estate and family, and especially his readiness

^s Schalch. Hakk. p. 8. citante Hotting. Smeg. Orient. c. 8. p. 291. confer Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. par. iii. c. 29. p. 421.

to sacrifice his only son, the son of his old age, and, which is above all, the son of the promise, when God by way of trial required it of him. How vigorous and triumphant was his faith, especially in the great promise of a son, which he firmly embraced against all human probabilities to the contrary? "Against hope he believed in hope, and being strong in faith, gave glory to God." How hearty was his dependence upon the Divine Providence, when called to leave his father's house, and to go into a strange country? how cheerfully did he "obey and go out, though he knew not whither he went?" How unconquerable was his patience, how even the composure of his mind in all conditions? In fifteen several journeys that he undertook, and ten difficult temptations which he underwent, he never betrayed the least murmuring or hard thought of God. Towards others he shewed the greatest tenderness and respect, the most meek and unpassionate temper, a mind inflamed with a desire of peace and concord: admirable his justice and equity in all his dealings, his great hospitality and bounty towards strangers, and for that end (say the Jews) he got him an house near the entering into Haran, that he might entertain strangers as they went in, or came out of the city, at his own table; as indeed he seems to have had that most excellent and divine temper of mind, an universal love and charity towards all men. But his greatest charity appeared in the care that he took of the souls of men. Maimonides tells us,^h that he kept a public school of institution, whither he gathered men together, and instructed them in that truth which he himself had embraced, and he gives us an account by what methods of reasoning and information he used to convince and persuade them. But whatever he did towards others, we are sure he did it towards those that were under his own charge. He had a numerous family, and a vast retinue, and he was as careful to inform them in the knowledge of the true God, and to instruct them in all the duties of religion. It is the character which God himself gave of him: "I know Abraham, that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." And so he did, his house being a school of piety, wherein religion was both taught and practised, many reclaimed from the errors and idolatries of the times, and all his domestics

^h Mor. Nevoch. par. ii. c. 39. p. 301.

and dependents solemnly dedicated to God by circumcision. Therefore, when it is said,ⁱ that he "brought with him all the souls which they had gotten in Haran," the Paraphrase of Onkelos renders it, *ית נפשוא דשעיר לאורחא בחין*, "the souls which they had subjected to the law in Haran;" Jonathan's Targum, and much at the same rate that of Jerusalem, *נפשוא רגירי*, the souls which they had "made proselytes in Haran;" or as Solomon Jarchi expresses it,^k a little more after the Hebrew mode, the souls which they had gathered, *בתחת כנפי השכינה*, "under the wings of the Divine Majesty;" and he farther adds, that Abraham proselyted the men, and Sarah the women. So when elsewhere we read of his "trained servants," some of the Jewish masters expound it by *חונכים למצות*, those that were "initiated and trained up in the knowledge of the law." Such being the temper of this holy man, God was pleased frequently to converse with him, and to impart his mind to him, acquainting him with the secret counsels and purposes of his providence, whence he is styled "the friend of God." But that which shewed him to be most dear to heaven, was the covenant which God solemnly made with him, wherein binding Abraham and his seed to a sincere and universal obedience, he obliged himself to become "their God," to be his "shield and his exceeding great reward," to take his posterity for his peculiar people, to increase their number and to enlarge their power, to settle them in a rich and a pleasant country, (a type of that heavenly and better country that is above,) and, which was the crown of all, that "in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed;" that is, the promised Messiah should proceed out of his loins, who should be a common blessing to mankind, in whom both Jew and Gentile should be justified and saved, and he by that means become (spiritually) "the father of many nations." This covenant was ratified and ensured on God's part by a solemn oath: "for when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee."^l On Abraham's part it was sealed with the sacrament of circumcision, which God instituted as a peculiar federal rite, to distinguish Abraham's posterity from all other people. Abraham died in the hundred and seventy-fifth year of his age, and was buried

ⁱ Gen. xii. 5.^k Gen. xiv. 14.^l Heb. vi. 13, 14.

in the sepulchre which himself had purchased of the sons of Heth. Contemporary with Abraham was his nephew Lot, a just man, but "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked;"^m for dwelling in the midst of an impure and debauched generation, "in seeing and hearing he vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." This endeared him to heaven, who took a particular care of him, and sent an angel on purpose to conduct him and his family out of Sodom, before he let loose that fatal vengeance that overturned it.

XVIII. Abraham being dead, Isaac stood up in his stead, the son of his parents' old age, and the fruit of an extraordinary promise. Being delivered from being a sacrifice, he frequented (say the Jews) the school of Shem, wherein he was educated in the knowledge of divine things, till his marriage with Rebekah. But however that was, he was a good man: we read of his "going out to meditate or pray in the field at even-tide,"ⁿ and elsewhere we find him publicly sacrificing and calling upon God. In all his distresses God still appeared to him, animated him against his fears, and encouraged him to go on in the steps of his father, renewing the same promises to him which he had made to Abraham. Nay, so visible and remarkable was the interest which he had in heaven, that Abimelech, king of the Philistines, and his courtiers, thought it their wisest course to confederate with him for this very reason, because "they saw certainly that the Lord was with him, and that he was the blessed of the Lord."^o Religion is the truest interest and the wisest portion, it is the surest protection, and the safest refuge. "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." Isaac dying in the hundred and eightieth year of his life, the patriarchate devolved upon his son Jacob, by virtue of the primogeniture which he had purchased of his brother Esau, and which had been confirmed to him by the grant and blessing of his father, (though subtly procured by the artifice and policy of his mother,) who also told him, that "God Almighty would bless and multiply him and his seed after him, and that the blessing of Abraham should come upon them." He entirely devoted himself to the fear and service of God, kept up his worship, and vindicated it from the encroachments of idolatry; he erected altars at every turn, and zealously purged his house

^m Pet. ii. 7, 8.

ⁿ Gen. xxiv. 63.

^o Gen. xxvi. 28, 29.

from those teraphim or idols which Rachel had brought along with her out of Laban's house, either to prevent her father's inquiring at them which way Jacob had made his escape, or to take away from him the instruments of his idolatry, or possibly that she might have wherewith to propitiate and pacify her father, in case he should pursue and overtake them, as Josephus thinks,^p though surely then she would have produced them, when she saw her father so zealous to retrieve them. He had frequent visions and divine condescensions; God appearing to him, and ratifying the covenant that he had made with Abraham, and changing his name from Jacob to Israel, as a memorial of the mighty prevalency which he had with heaven. In his latter time he removed his family into Egypt, where God had prepared his way by the preferment of his son Joseph to be viceroy and lord of that vast and fertile country, advanced to that place of state and grandeur by many strange and unsearchable methods of the Divine Providence. By his two wives, the daughters of his uncle Laban, and his two handmaids, he had twelve sons, who afterwards became founders of the twelve tribes of the Jewish nation: to whom upon his death-bed he bequeathed his blessings, consigning their several portions, and the particular fates of every tribe; among whom that of Judah is most remarkable, to whom it was foretold,^q that the Messiah should arise out of that tribe, that the regal power and political sovereignty should be annexed to it, and remain in it till the Messiah came, at whose coming the "sceptre should depart, and the lawgiver from between his knees." And thus all their own paraphrasts, both Onkelos, Jonathan, and he of Jerusalem, do expound it, that there should "not want kings or rulers of the house of Judah, nor scribes to teach the law of that race, ער זמן דיירי מלכא משיחא דירידיא דיא מלכותא, until the time that Messiah the king shall come, whose the kingdom is." And so it accordingly came to pass, for at the time of Christ's birth, Herod, who was a stranger, had usurped the throne, debased the authority of their great sanhedrim, murdered their senators, divested them of all judiciary power, and kept them so low, that they had not power left to put a man to death. "And unto him shall the gathering of the people be." A prophecy exactly accomplished, when in the first ages of Christianity the nations of

^p Antiq. Jud. l. i. c. 19.

^q Gen. xlix. 10.

the world flocked to the standard of Christ at the publication of the gospel. Jacob died one hundred and forty-seven years old, and was buried in Canaan, in the sepulchre of his fathers; after whose decease his posterity for some hundreds of years were afflicted under the Egyptian yoke : till God, remembering the covenant he had made with their fathers, powerfully rescued them from the iron furnace, and conducted them through the wilderness into the land of promise, where he framed and ordered their commonwealth, appointed laws for the government of the church, and settled them under a more fixed and certain dispensation.

XIX. Hitherto we have surveyed the state of the church in the constant succession of the patriarchal line. But if we step a little farther into the history of those times, we shall find that there were some extraordinary persons without the pale of that holy tribe, renowned for the worship of God, and the profession of religion ; among whom two are most considerable, Melchisedek and Job. Melchisedek was king of Salem in the land of Canaan, and “priest of the most high God.” The short account which the scripture gives of him, hath left room for various fancies and conjectures. The opinion that has most generally obtained is, that Melchisedek was Shem, one of the sons of Noah, who was of a great age, and lived above seventy years after Abraham’s coming into Canaan, and might therefore well enough meet him in his triumphant return from his conquest over the kings of the plain. But notwithstanding the universal authority which this opinion assumes to itself, it appears not to me with any tolerable probability, partly because Canaan, where Melchisedek lived, was none of those countries which were allotted to Shem and to his posterity, and unlikely it is that he should be prince in a foreign country : partly, because those things which the scripture reports concerning Melchisedek, do no ways agree to Shem, as that “he was without father and mother, without genealogy,” &c. whenas Moses does most exactly describe and record Shem and his family, both as to his ancestors and as to his posterity. That therefore which seems most probable in the case is, that he was one of the *reguli* or petty kings (whereof there were many) in the land of Canaan, but a pious and devout man, and a worshipper of the true God, as there were many others in those days among the idolatrous

nations; he being extraordinarily raised up by God from among the Canaanites, and brought in without mention of parents, original or end, without any predecessor or successor in his office, that he might be a fitter type of the royal and eternal priesthood of Christ. And for any more particular account concerning his person, it were folly and rashness over-curiously to inquire after what God seems industriously to have concealed from us. The great character under which the scripture takes notice of him, is his relation to our blessed Saviour, who is more than once said to “be a priest,” *κατὰ τάξιν*, “after the order,” in the same way and manner that Melchisedek was, or (as the apostle explains himself) “after the similitude of Melchisedek.” Our Lord was such a priest as Melchisedek was, there being a nearer similitude and conformity between them, than ever was between any other priests whatsoever: a subject which St. Paul largely and particularly treats of. Passing by the minuter instances of the parallel, taken from the name of his person, Melchisedek, that is, “King of righteousness,” and his title to his kingdom, “king of Salem,” that is, “of peace;” we shall observe three things especially wherein he was a type of Christ. First, in the peculiar qualification of his person, something being recorded of him uncommon to the rest of men, and that is, that he was “without father, without mother, and without descent.”^r Not that Melchisedek, like Adam, was immediately created, or in an instant dropped down from heaven, but that he hath no kindred recorded in the story, which brings him in without any mention of father or mother, *οὐκ ἴσμεν ποτὲ τίνα πατέρα ἔσχεν, ἢ τίνα μητέρα*, as Chrysostom glosses, “we know not what father or mother he had:”^s he was (says St. Paul) *ἀγενεολόγητος*, “without genealogy,” without having any pedigree extant upon record; whence the ancient Syriac version truly expresses the sense of the whole passage, thus, “Whose neither father nor mother are written among the generations,” that is, the genealogies of the ancient patriarchs. And thus he eminently typified Christ, of whom this is really true: he is without father in respect of his human nature, begotten only of a pure virgin; without mother, in respect of his divinity, being begotten of his Father before all worlds, by an eternal and ineffable generation. Secondly, Melchisedek typified our Saviour in the

^r Heb. vii. 15.^s Heb. vii. 3.^t Hom. xii. in Hebr. s. 1. vol. xii. p. 121.

duration and continuance of his office ; for so it is said of him, that he was “ without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of Góð, abideth a priest continually :” by which we are not to understand that Melchisedek never died, for being a man he was subject to the same common law of mortality with other men ; but the meaning is, that as he is said to be “ without father and mother,” because the scripture speaking of him makes no mention of his parents, his genealogy, and descent, so he is said to “ abide a priest for ever, without any beginning of days, or end of life,” because we have no account of any that either preceded or succeeded him in his office, no mention of the time either when he took it up or laid it down. And herein how lively and eminent a type of Christ, the true Melchisedek, who, as to his divine nature, was without beginning of days from eternal ages, and who either in the execution or virtue of his office abides for ever. There is no abolition, no translation of his office, no expectation of any to arise that shall succeed him in it : “ He was made a priest, not after the law of a carnal commandment,” a transient and mutable dispensation, “ but after the power of an endless life.” Thirdly, Melchisedek was a type of Christ in his excellency above all other priests. St. Paul’s great design is to evince the preeminence and precedency of Melchisedek above all the priests of the Mosaic ministration ; yea, above Abraham himself, the founder and father of the Jewish nation, from whom they reckoned it so great an honour to derive themselves. And this the apostle proves by a double instance. First, that Abraham, in whose loins the Levitical priests then were, paid tithes to Melchisedek, when he “ gave him the tenth of all his spoils,” as due to God and his ministers, thereby confessing himself and his posterity inferior to him. “ Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.”^u Secondly, that Melchisedek conferred upon Abraham a solemn benediction, it being a standing part of the priest’s office to bless the people. And this was an undeniable argument of superiority. “ He whose descent is not counted from them (the legal priests) received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises : and without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better.”^x Whereby it

^u Heb. vii. 4, 5, 6, etc.

^x Ibid. 6, 7.

evidently appears, that Melchisedek was greater than Abraham, and consequently than all the Levitical priests that descended from him. Now herein he admirably prefigured and shadowed out our blessed Saviour, a person peculiarly chosen out by God, sent into the world upon a nobler and a more important errand, owned by more solemn and mighty attestations from heaven, than ever was any other person; his office incomparably beyond that of the legal economy, his person greater, his undertaking weightier, his design more sublime and excellent, his oblation more valuable and meritorious, his prayers more prevalent and successful, his office more durable and lasting, than ever any whose business it was to intercede and mediate between God and man.

XX. The other extraordinary person under this economy is Job, concerning whom two things are to be inquired into—who he was, and when he lived. For the first, we find him described by his name, his country, his kindred, his quality, his religion, and his sufferings, though in many of them we are left under great uncertainties, and to the satisfaction only of probable conjectures. For his name, among many conjectures, two are especially considerable, though founded upon very different reasons; one, that it is from *איוב*, signifying one that “grieves” or groans, mystically presaging those grievous miseries and sufferings that afterwards came upon him; the other, more probably, from *אוב*, to “love,” or to desire, noting him the desire and delight of his parents, earnestly prayed for, and affectionately embraced with the tenderest endearments. His country was the land of Uz, though where that was, is almost as much disputed as about the source of Nilus: some will have it Armenia; others Palestine, or the land of Canaan; and some of the Jewish masters assure us, that *בית מדרשו*, “his school,” or place of institution, was at Tiberias, and nothing more commonly shewed to travellers than Job’s well, in the way between Ramah and Jerusalem; others place it in Syria, near Damascus, so called from Uz, the supposed founder of that city; others, a little more northward, at Apamea, now called Hama, where his house is said to be shewed at this day. Most make it to be part of Idumæa, near mount Seir, or else Arabia the Desert, (probably it was in the confines of both,) this part of Arabia being nearest to the Sabæans and Chaldæans, who invaded him, and most applicable to his dwelling among the

“ sons of the East,” to the situation of his friends who came to visit him, and best corresponding with those frequent Arabisms discernible both in the language and discourses of Job and his friends; not to say that this country produced persons exceedingly addicted to learning and contemplation, and the studies of natural philosophy, whence the wise men who came out of the East to worship Christ are thought by many to have been Arabians. For his kindred and his friends, we find four taken notice of, who came to visit him in his distress: Eliphaz the Temanite, the son probably of Teman, and grand-child of Esau by his eldest son Eliphaz, the country deriving its name Teman from his father, and was situate in Idumæa, in the borders of the Desert Arabia; Bildad the Shuhite, a descendant in all likelihood of Shuah, one of the sons of Abraham by his wife Keturah, whose seat was in this part of Arabia; Zophar the Naamathite, a country lying near those parts; and Elihu the Buzite, of the offspring of Buz, the son of Nahor, and so nearly related to Job himself. He “ was the son of Barachel, of the kindred of Ram,” who was the head of the family, and his habitation was in the parts of Arabia the Desert, near Euphrates, or at least in the southern part of Mesopotamia bordering upon it. As for Job himself, he is made by some a Canaanite, of the posterity of Ham; by others to descend from Shem, by his son Amram, whose eldest son’s name was Uz; by most from Esau, the father of the Idumæan nations: but most probably, either from Nahor, Abraham’s brother, whose sons were Huz, Buz, Chesed, &c., or from Abraham himself by some of the sons which he had by his wife Keturah; whereby an account is most probably given, how Job came to be imbued with those seeds of piety and true religion for which he was so eminently remarkable, as deriving them from those religious principles and instructions which Abraham and Nahor had bequeathed to their posterity. His quality and the circumstances of his external state were very considerable, a man rich and honourable: “ His substance was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a very great household,” so that he was “ the greatest of all the men of the East;” himself largely describes the great honour and prosperity of his fortunes, that “ he washed his steps in butter, and the rock poured out rivers of oil; when he went out to the gate

through the city, and prepared his seat in the street, the young men saw him and hid themselves, the aged arose and stood up, the princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth, &c. He delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him, the blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, &c. He brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of their teeth," &c. Indeed, so great his state and dignity, that it has led many into a persuasion that he was king of Idumæa, a powerful and mighty prince : a fancy that has received no small encouragement from the common but groundless confounding of Job with Jobab, king of Edom, of the race of Esau. For the story gives no intimation of any such royal dignity to which Job was advanced, but always speaks of him as a private person, though exceeding wealthy and prosperous, and thereby probably of extraordinary power and estimation in his country. Nay, that he might not want fit companions in his regal capacity, three of his friends are made kings as well as he, the Septuagint translators themselves styling Eliphaz king of the Temanites, Bildad of the Shuhites, and Zophar king of the Minæans, though with as little, probably less, reason than the former.

XXI. But whatever his condition was, we are sure he was no less eminent for piety and religion : he " was a man perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil." Though living among the idolatrous Gentiles, he kept up the true and sincere worship of God, daily offered up sacrifices and prayers to heaven, piously instructed his children and family, lived in an entire dependence upon the Divine Providence, in all his discourses expressed the highest and most honourable sentiments and thoughts of God, and such as best became the majesty of an infinite being ; in all transactions he was just and righteous, compassionate and charitable, modest and humble ; indeed, by the character of God himself, who knew him best, " there was none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, fearing God, and eschewing evil ;" his mind was submissive and compliant, his patience generous and unshaken, great even to a proverb, " you have heard of the patience of Job." And enough he had to try it to the utmost, if we consider what sufferings he underwent ; those evils which are wont but singly to seize upon other men, all centred and met in him. Plundered in his estate by the Sabæan

and Chaldaean freebooters, (whose standing livelihood were spoils and robberies,) and not an ox or ass left of all the herd, not a sheep or a lamb either for food or sacrifice: undone in his posterity, his seven sons and three daughters being all slain at once by the fall of one house: blasted in his credit and good name, and that by his nearest friends, who traduced and challenged him for a dissembler and an hypocrite. Ruined in his health, being smitten with sore boils from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, till his body became a very hospital of diseases: tormented in his mind with sad and uncomfortable reflections, "the arrows of the Almighty being shot within him, the poison whereof drank up his spirit, the terrors of God setting themselves in array against him:" all which were aggravated and set home by Satan, the grand engineer of all those torments; and all this continuing for at least twelve months, (say the Jews,) probably for a much longer time, and yet endured with great courage and fortitude of mind, till God put a period to this tedious trial, and crowned his sufferings with an ample restitution. We have seen who this excellent person was, we are next to inquire when he lived. And here we meet with almost an infinite variety of opinions,^y some making him contemporary with Abraham, others with Jacob, which had he been, we should doubtless have found some mention of him in their story, as well as we do of Melchisedek; others again refer him to the time of the law given at mount Sinai, and the Israelites' travels in the wilderness; others to the times of the judges after the settlement of the Israelites in the land of promise; nay, some to the reign of David and Solomon; and I know not whether the reader will not smile at the fancy of the Turkish chronologists,^z who make Job major-domo to Solomon, as they make Alexander the Great the general of his army. Others go farther, and place him among those that were carried away in the Babylonish captivity, yea, in the time of Ahasuerus, and make his fair daughters to be of the number of those beautiful young virgins that were sought for for the king: follies that need no confutation. It is certain that he was elder than Moses: his kindred and family, his way of sacrificing, the idolatry rife in his time, evidently placing him before that age; besides that there are not the least footsteps in all his book of any of the

^y Vide Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. par. iii. c. 22.

^z Aug. Busbeq. de Legat. Turnic. Epist. i. p. 94. ed. 1605.

great things done for the Israelites' deliverance, which we can hardly suppose should have been omitted, being examples so fresh in memory, and so apposite to the design of that book. Most probable therefore it is, that he lived about the time of the Israelitish captivity in Egypt, though whether, as some Jews will have it, born that very year that Jacob came down into Egypt, and dying that year that they went out of Egypt, I dare not peremptorily affirm. And this, no question, is the reason why we find nothing concerning him in the writings of Moses; the history of those times being crowded up in a very little room, little being recorded even of the Israelites themselves for near two hundred years, more than in general that they were heavily oppressed under the Egyptian yoke. More concerning this great and good man, and the things relating to him, if the reader desire to know, he may among others consult the elaborate exertions of the younger Spanhemius in his *Historia Jobi*, where the largest curiosity may find enough to satisfy it.

XXII. And now for a conclusion to this economy, if we reflect a little upon the state of things under this period of the world, we shall find that the religion of those early ages was plain and simple, unforced and natural, and highly agreeable to the common dictates and notions of men's minds. They were not educated under any foreign institutions, nor conducted by a body of numerous laws and written constitutions, but were *αὐτήκοοι καὶ αὐτομαθεῖς*, (as Philo says of them,^a) "tutored and instructed by the dictates of their own minds," and the principles of that law that was written in their hearts, following the order of nature and right reason, as the safest and most ancient rule. By which means, (as one of the ancients observes,^b) *ἐλεύθερον καὶ ἀνειμένον εὐσεβέας κατῴρθουν τρόπον, βίῃ μὲν τῇ κατὰ τὴν φύσιν κεκοσμημένοι*, "they maintained a free and uninterrupted course of religion, conducting their lives according to the rules of nature," so that having purged their minds from lust and passion, and attained to the true knowledge of God, they had no need of external and written laws. Their creed was short and perspicuous, their notions of God great and venerable, their devotion and piety real and substantial, their worship grave and serious, and such as became the grandeur and majesty of the divine being; their rites and ceremonies few and proper, their

^a Lib. de Abrah. p. 350.

^b Euseb. Præpar. Evang. l. vii. c. 6.

obedience prompt and sincere, and, indeed, the whole conduct of their conversation discovering itself in the most essential and important duties of the human life. According to this standard it was that our blessed Saviour mainly designed to reform religion in his most excellent institutions, to retrieve the piety and purity, the innocency and simplicity of those first and more uncorrupted ages of the world, to improve the laws of nature, and to reduce mankind from ritual observances to natural and moral duties, as the most vital and essential parts of religion, and was therefore pleased to charge Christianity with no more than two positive institutions, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, that men might learn that the main of religion lies not in such things as these. Hence Eusebius^c undertakes at large to prove the faith and manners of the holy patriarchs who lived before the times of Moses, and the belief and practice of Christians to be *ἓνα καὶ τὸν αὐτὸν*, "one and the same:" which he does not only assert and make good in general, but deduce from particular instances, the examples of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Melchisedek, Job, &c. whom he expressly proves to have believed and lived *ἀντικρὺς Χριστιανικῶς*, "altogether after the manner of Christians;" nay, that they had the name also as well as the thing, *ὥστε καὶ τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ προσηγορίας ἡμῖν ὁμοίως ἐκοινώνουν*, as he shews from that place, (which he proves to be meant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), *μὴ ἄπτεσθε τῶν Χριστῶν μου*, "touch not my Christians, mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." And, in short, that as they had the same common religion, so they had the common blessing and reward.

SECTION II.

OF THE MOSAICAL DISPENSATION.

Moses the minister of this economy. His miraculous preservation. His learned and noble education. The divine temper of his mind. His conducting the Israelites out of Egypt. Their arrival at mount Sinai. The law given, and how. Moral laws; the decalogue, whether a perfect compendium of the moral law. The ceremonial laws, what. Reduced to their proper heads. Such as concerned the matter of their worship. Sacrifices, and the several kinds of them. Circumcision. The passover, and its typical relation. The place of public worship. The tabernacle and temple, and the several

^c Demonstr. Evang. l. i. c. 5, 6. et loc. supr. cit.

parts of them, and their typical aspects considered. Their stated times and feasts, weekly, monthly, annual. The sabbatical year. The year of jubilee. Laws concerning the persons ministering; priests, Levites, the high-priest, how a type of Christ. The design of the ceremonial law, and its abolition. The judicial laws, what. The Mosaic law, how divided by the Jews into affirmative and negative precepts, and why. The several ways of divine revelation. Urim and Thummim, what, and the manner of its giving answers. Bath-Col, whether any such way of revelation among the Jews. Revelation by dreams: by visions. The revelation of the Holy Spirit, what. Moses, his way of prophecy wherein exceeding the rest. The pacate way of the spirit of prophecy. This spirit, when it ceased in the Jewish church. The state of the church under this dispensation briefly noted. From the giving of the law till Samuel. From Samuel to Solomon. Its condition under the succeeding kings till the captivity. From thence till the coming of Christ. The state of the Jewish church in the time of Christ more particularly considered. The profanations of the temple. The corruption of their worship. The abuse of the priesthood. The depravation of the law by false glosses. Their oral and unwritten law. Its original and succession according to the mind of the Jews. Their unreasonable and blasphemous preferring it above the written law. Their religious observing the traditions of the elders. The vow of Corban, what. The superseding moral duties by it. The sects in the Jewish church. The Pharisees, their denomination, rise, temper, and principles. Sadducees, their impious principles and evil lives. The Essenes, their original, opinions, and way of life. The Herodians, who. The Samaritans. Karræans. The sect of the Zealots. The Roman tyranny over the Jews.

THE church, which had hitherto lain dispersed in private families, and had often been reduced to an inconsiderable number, being now multiplied into a great and a populous nation, God was pleased to enter into covenant, not any longer with particular persons, but with the body of the people, and to govern the church by more certain and regular ways and methods, than it had hitherto been. This dispensation began with the delivery of the law, and continued till the final period of the Jewish state, consisting only "of meats and drinks, and divers washing, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." In the survey whereof we shall chiefly consider what laws were given for the government of the church, by what methods of revelation God communicated his mind and will to them, and what was the state of the church, especially towards the conclusion of this economy.

II. The great minister of this dispensation was Moses, the son of Amram, of the house of Levi, a person whose signal preservation when but an infant, presaged him to be born for great and generous undertakings. Pharaoh, king of Egypt, desirous to suppress the growing numbers of the Jewish nation, had afflicted and kept them under with all the rigorous severities of

tyranny and oppression. But this not taking its effect, he made a law that all Hebrew male-children should be drowned as soon as born, knowing well enough how to kill the root, if he could keep any more branches from springing up. But the wisdom of heaven defeated his crafty and barbarous designs. Among others that were born at that time was Moses, a goodly child, and whom his mother was infinitely desirous to preserve: but having concealed him, till the saving of his might endanger the losing her own life, her affection suggested to her this little stratagem; she prepared an ark made of paper-reeds, and pitched within, and so putting him aboard this little vessel, threw him into the river Nilus, committing him to the mercy of the waves, and the conduct of the Divine Providence. God, who wisely orders all events, had so disposed things, that Pharaoh's daughter, (whose name, say the Jews, was Bithia; Thermuth, says Josephus;^d say the Arabians, Sihhoun,) being troubled with a distemper that would not endure the hot baths, was come down at this time to wash in the Nile, where the cries of the tender babe soon reached her ears. She commanded the ark to be brought ashore, which was no sooner opened, but the mournful oratory of the weeping infant sensibly struck her with compassionate resentments: and the Jews add,^e that she no sooner touched the babe, but she was immediately healed; and cried out that he was a holy child, and that she would save his life; for which (say they) she obtained the favour to "be brought under the wings of the Divine Majesty," and to be called the daughter of God. His sister Miriam, who had all this while beheld the scene afar off, officiously proffered her service to the princess to call an Hebrew nurse, and accordingly went and brought his mother. To her care he was committed, with a charge to look tenderly to him, and the promise of a reward. But the hopes of that could add but little, where nature was so much concerned. Home goes the mother joyful and proud of her own pledge and the royal charge, carefully providing for his tender years. His infant state being passed, he was restored to the princess, who adopted him for her own son, bred him up at court, where he was polished with all the arts of a noble and ingenuous education, instructed in the modes of civility and behaviour, in the methods of policy and government, "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,"

^d Antiq. Jud. l. ii. c. 5.^e R. Eliez. c. 48. apud Hotting. Smeg. Orient. c. 8. p. 402.

whose renown for wisdom is not only once and again taken notice of in holy writ, but their admirable skill in all liberal sciences, natural, moral, and divine, beyond the rate and proportion of other nations, is sufficiently celebrated by foreign writers. To these accomplishments God was pleased to add a divine temper of mind, a great zeal for God, not able to endure any thing that seemed to clash with interests of the divine honour and glory; a mighty courage and resolution in God's service, whose edge was not to be taken off either by threats or charms; "He was not afraid of the king's commandment, nor feared the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing him that is invisible."^f His contempt of the world was great and admirable, slighting the honours of Pharaoh's court, and the fair probabilities of the crown, the treasures and pleasures of that rich, soft, and luxurious country, out of a firm belief of the invisible rewards of another world; "He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of reward."^g Josephus relates,^b that when but a child he was presented by the princess to her father, as one whom she had adopted for her son, and designed for his successor in the kingdom; the king, taking him up into his arms, put his crown upon his head, which the child immediately pulled off again, and throwing it upon the ground, trampled it under his feet: an action which, however looked upon by some courtiers then present, *ὡς οἰωνὸν ἐπὶ τῇ βασιλείᾳ φέρων*, "as portending a fatal omen to the kingdom," did, however, evidently presage his generous contempt of the grandeur and honours of the court, and those plausible advantages of sovereignty that were offered to him. His patience was insuperable, not tired out with abuses and disappointments of the king of Egypt, with the hardships and troubles of the wilderness, and, which was beyond all, with the cross and vexatious humours of a stubborn and unquiet generation. He was of a most calm and tractable disposition, his spirit not easily ruffled with passion; he who in the cause of God and religion could be bold and fierce as a lion, was in his own patient as a lamb, God

^f Heb. xi. 27.^g Heb. xi. 24, 25, 26.^b Antiq. Jud. l. ii. c. 5.

himself having given this character of him, "that he was the meekest man upon the earth."

III. This great personage, thus excellently qualified, God made choice of him to be the commander and conductor of the Jewish nation, and his ambassador to the king of Egypt, to demand the enfranchisement of his people, and free liberty to go serve and worship the God of their fathers. And that he might not seem a mere pretender to divine revelation, but that he really had an immediate commission from heaven, God was pleased to furnish him with extraordinary credentials, and to seal his commission with a power of working miracles beyond all the arts of magic, and those tricks for which the Egyptian sorcerers were so famous in the world. But Pharaoh, unwilling to part with such useful vassals, and having oppressed them beyond possibility of reconciliation, would not hearken to the proposal, but sometimes downright rejected it, otherwhiles sought by subtle and plausible pretences to evade and shift it off; till by many astonishing miracles and severe judgments, God extorted at length a grant from him. Under the conduct of Moses they set forwards, after at least two hundred years servitude under the Egyptian yoke; and though Pharaoh, sensible of his error, with a great army pursued them, either to cut them off, or bring them back, God made way for them through the midst of the sea, the waters becoming like a wall of brass on each side of them, till being all passed to the other shore, those invisible cords which had hitherto tied up that liquid element bursting in sunder, the waters returned and overwhelmed their enemies that pursued them. Thus God by the same stroke can protect his friends and punish his enemies. Nor did the Divine Providence here take its leave of them, but became their constant guard and defence in all their journeys, waiting upon them through their several stations in the wilderness; the most memorable whereof was that at mount Sinai in Arabia, the place where God delivered them "the pattern in the mount," according to which the form both of their church and state was to be framed and modelled. In order hereunto Moses is called up into the mount, where by fasting and prayer he conversed with heaven, and received the body of their laws. Three days the people were, by a pious and devout care, to sanctify and prepare themselves for the promulgation of the law: they might not come near

their wives, were commanded to wash their clothes, as an emblem and representation of that cleansing of the heart, and that inward purity of mind, wherewith they were to entertain the divine will. On the third day, in the morning, God descended from heaven with great appearances of majesty and terror, with thunders and lightnings, with black clouds and tempests, with shouts and "the loud noise of a trumpet," (which trumpet, say the Jews, was made of the horn of that ram that was offered in the room of Isaac,) with fire and smoke on the top of the mount, ascending up like "the smoke of a furnace;" the mountain itself greatly quaking, the people trembling; nay, "so terrible was the sight, that Moses (who had so frequently, so familiarly conversed with God) said, I exceedingly fear and quake."¹ All which pompous trains of terror and magnificence God made use of at this time, to excite the more solemn attention to his laws, and to beget a greater reverence and veneration for them in the minds of the people, and to let them see how able he was to call them to account, and by the severest penalties to vindicate the violation of his law.

IV. The code and digest of those laws, which God now gave to the Jews as the terms of that national covenant that he made with them, consisted of three sorts of precepts, moral, ecclesiastical, and political; which the Jews will have intimated by those three words that so frequently occur in the writings of Moses, *laws*, *statutes*, and *judgments*. By תוֹרָה, "laws," they understand the moral law, the notices of good and evil naturally implanted in men's minds: by חֻקִּים, or "statutes," ceremonial precepts, instituted by God with peculiar reference to his church: by מִשְׁפָּטִים, or "judgments," political laws concerning justice and equity, the order of human society, and the prudent and peaceable managery of the commonwealth. The moral laws inserted into this code are those contained in the decalogue,^k עֲשֵׂרֵת הַדְּבָרִים, as they are called, "the ten words" that were written upon the two tables of stone. These were nothing else but a summary comprehension of the great laws of nature, engraven at first upon the minds of all men in the world; the most material part whereof was now consigned to writing, and incorporated into the body of the Jewish law. I know the decalogue is generally taken to be a complete system of all natural laws:

¹ Heb. xii. 21.

^k Deut. iv. 13.

but whoever impartially considers the matter, will find that there are many instances of duty so far from being commanded in it, that they are not reducible to any part of it, unless hooked in by subtleties of wit, and drawn thither by forced and unnatural inferences. What provision, except in one case or two, do any of those commandments make against neglects of duty? Where do they oblige us to do good to others, to love, assist, relieve our enemies? Gratitude and thankfulness to benefactors is one of the prime and essential laws of nature, and yet nowhere, that I know of, (unless we will have it implied in the preface to the law,) commanded or intimated in the decalogue: with many other cases, which it is naturally evident are our duty, whereof no footsteps are to be seen in this compendium, unless hunted out by nice and sagacious reasonings, and made out by a long train of consequences, never originally intended in the commandment, and which not one in a thousand are capable of deducing from it. It is probable, therefore, that God reduced only so many of the laws of nature into writing, as were proper to the present state and capacities of that people to whom they were given; superadding some, and explaining others by the preaching and ministry of the prophets, who, in their several ages, endeavoured to bring men out of the shades and thickets into clear light and noon-day, by clearing up men's obligations to those natural and essential duties, in the practice whereof human nature was to be advanced unto its just accomplishment and perfection. Hence it was that our Lord, who "came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil" and perfect it, has explained the obligations of the natural law more fully and clearly, more plainly and intelligibly, rendered our duty more fixed and certain, and extended many instances of obedience to higher measures, to a greater exactness and perfection, than ever they were understood to have before. Thus he commands a free and universal charity, not only that we love our friends and relations, but that "we love our enemies, bless them that curse us, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute us." He hath forbidden malice and revenge with more plainness and smartness; obliged us to live not only according to the measures of sobriety, but extended it to self-denial, and taking up the cross, and laying down our lives, whenever the honour of God and the interest of religion

calls for it; he not only commands us to do no wrong, but when we have done it, to make restitution; not only to retrench our irregular appetites, but "to cut off our right hand, and pluck out our right eye, and cast them from us," that is, mortify and offer violence to those vicious inclinations which are as dear to us as the most useful and necessary parts and members of our body. Besides all this, had God intended the decalogue for a perfect summary of the laws of nature, we cannot suppose that he would have taken any but such into the collection; whereas the fourth commandment, concerning the seventh day, is unquestionably typical and ceremonial, and has nothing more of a natural and eternal obligation in it, than that God should be served and honoured both with public and private worship, which cannot be done without some portions of time set apart for it: but that this should be done just at such a time, and by such proportions, upon the seventh rather than the sixth or the eighth day, is no part of a natural religion. And indeed the reasons and arguments that are annexed to it, to enforce the observance of it, clearly shew that it is of a later date, and of another nature than the rest of those precepts in whose company we find it; though it seems at first sight to pass without any peculiar note of discrimination from the rest. As for the rest, they are laws of eternal righteousness, and did not derive their value and authority from the divine sanction which God here gave them at mount Sinai, but from their own moral and internal goodness and equity; being founded in the nature of things, and the essential and unchangeable differences of good and evil. By which means they always were, always will be, obligatory and indispensable, being as eternal and immutable as the nature of God himself.

V. The second sort of laws were ceremonial, divine constitutions concerning ritual observances, and matters of ecclesiastical cognizance and relation, and were instituted for a double end; partly for the more orderly government of the church, and the more decent administration of the worship of God; partly that they might be types and figures of the evangelical state, "shadows of good things to come," visible and symbolical representments of the Messiah, and those great blessings and privileges which he was to introduce into the world; which doubtless was the reason why God was so infinitely punctual

and particular in his directions about these matters, giving orders about the minutest circumstances of the temple-ministration, because every part of it had a glance at a future and better state of things. The number of them was great, and the observation burdensome; the whole nation groaning under the servility of that yoke. They were such as principally related to God's worship, and may be reduced either to such as concerned the worship itself, or the circumstances of time, place, and persons that did attend it. Their worship consisted chiefly in three things: prayers, sacrifices, and sacraments. Prayers were daily put up together with their offerings; and though we have very few constitutions concerning them, yet the constant practice of that church, and the particular forms of prayer yet extant in their writings, are a sufficient evidence. Sacrifices were the constant and more solemn part of their public worship; yea, they had their עֹלֶת חֹמֶד, "their continual burnt-offering,"¹ a lamb offered morning and evening, with a measure of flour, oil, and wine, the charge whereof was defrayed out of the treasury of the temple. The rest of their sacrifices may be considered either as they were expiatory or eucharistical. Expiatory, were those that were offered as an atonement for the sins of the people, to pacify the divine displeasure, and to procure his pardon; which they did by virtue of their typical relation to that great sacrifice which the Son of God was in the fulness of time to offer up for the sins of the world. They were either of a more general relation, for the expiation of sin in general, whole burnt-offerings, which were entirely (the skin and the entrails only excepted) burnt to ashes; or of a more private and particular concernment, designed for the redemption of particular offences, whereof there were two sorts: חֹטֵאת, or "the sin-offering," for involuntary offences committed through error or ignorance; which, according to the condition and capacity of the person, were either for the priest, or the prince, or the whole body of the people, or a private person: the other זִבְחֵי עֲוֹנוֹת, or "the trespass-offering," for sins done wittingly, studied and premeditated transgressions, and which the man could not pretend to be the effects of surprise or chance. Eucharistical sacrifices were testimonies of gratitude to God for mercies received, whereof three sorts especially: 1. מִנְחָה, or "the meat-offering, made up of things

¹ Exod. xxix. 42.

without life, oil, fine flour, incense, &c. which the worshipper offered as a thankful return for the daily preservation and provisions of life, and therefore it consisted only of the fruits of the ground. 2. **זבח שלמים**, or "the peace-offering;" this was done either out of a grateful sense of some blessing conferred, or as a voluntary offering to which the person had obliged himself by vow, in expectation of some safety or deliverance which he had prayed for. In this sacrifice God had his part, the fat, which was the only part of it burnt by fire; the priest his, as an instrument of the ministration; the offerer his, that he might have wherewith to "rejoice before the Lord." 3. **תודאיו**, "a thanksgiving-offering," or a sacrifice of praise; it was a mixed kind of sacrifice, consisting of living creatures and the fruits of the earth, which they might offer at their own will, but it must be eaten the same day, and none of it left until the morrow. What other provisions we meet with concerning ceremonial uncleannesses, first-fruits, the first-born, tenths, &c. are conveniently reducible to some of these heads which we have already mentioned. The last part of their worship concerned their sacraments, which were two; circumcision, and the paschal supper. Circumcision was the federal rite annexed by God as a seal to the covenant which he made with Abraham and his posterity; and accordingly renewed and taken into the body of the Mosaical constitutions. It was to be administered the eighth day, which the Jews understand not of so many days complete, but the current time, six full days, and part of the other. In the room of this, baptism succeeds in the Christian church. The passover, which was the eating of the paschal lamb, was instituted as an annual memorial of their signal and miraculous deliverance out of Egypt, and as a typical representation of our spiritual redemption by Christ from the bondage of sin and that hell that follows it. It was to be celebrated with a male lamb, without blemish, taken out of the flock; to note "the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world," who was taken from among men, "a lamb without blemish and without spot, holy, harmless, and separate from sinners." The door-posts of the house were to be sprinkled with the blood of the lamb, to signify our security from the divine vengeance by the "blood of sprinkling." The lamb was to be roasted and eaten whole; typifying the great sufferings of our blessed Saviour, who was to

pass through the fire of divine wrath, and to be wholly embraced and entertained by us in all his offices, as king, priest, and prophet. None but those that were clean and circumcised might eat of it; to shew that only true believers, holy and good men, can be partakers of Christ and the merits of his death: it was to be eaten standing, with the loins girt, and their staff in their hand, to put them in mind what haste they made out of the house of bondage; and to intimate to us what present diligence we should use to get from under the empire and tyranny of sin and Satan, under the conduct and assistance of the Captain of our salvation. The eating of it was to be mixed with bitter herbs; partly as a memorial of that bitter servitude which they underwent in the land of Egypt, partly as a type of that repentance, and bearing of the cross, (duties difficult and unpleasant,) which all true Christians must undergo. Lastly, it was to be eaten with unleavened bread; all manner of leaven being at that time to be banished out of their houses with the most critical diligence and curiosity, to represent what infinite care we should take to cleanse and purify our hearts, "to purge out the old leaven, that we may be a new lump:" and that since "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us, therefore we should keep the feast," (the festival-commemoration of his death,) "not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."^m

VI. The places of their public worship were either the tabernacle made in the wilderness, or the temple built by Solomon, between which in the main there was no other difference, than that the tabernacle was an ambulatory temple, as the temple was a standing tabernacle, together with all the rich costly furniture that was in them. The parts of it were three: the holiest of all, whither none entered but the high-priest, and that but once a year, this was a type of heaven; the holy place, whither the priests entered every day to perform their sacred ministrations; and the outward court, whither the people came to offer up their prayers and sacrifices. In the *sanctum sanctorum*, or holiest of all, there was the golden censer, typifying the merits and intercession of Christ; the ark of the covenant, as a representation of him who is the Mediator of the covenant between God and

^m 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

man; the golden pot of manna, a type of our Lord, the true manna, "the bread that came down from heaven;" the rod of Aaron that budded, signifying the branch of the root of Jesse, that though our Saviour's family should be reduced to a state of so much meanness and obscurity, as to appear but like the trunk or stump of a tree, yet "there should come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch grow out of his roots, which should stand for an ensign of the people, and in him should the Gentiles trust."^a And within the ark were the two tables of the covenant, to denote him "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," and who is the end and perfection of the law: over it were the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat, who looking towards each other, and both to the mercy-seat, denoted the two testaments, or dispensations of the church, which admirably agree, and both direct to Christ, the Mediator of the covenant. The propitiatory, or mercy-seat, was the golden covering to the ark, where God veiling his majesty was wont to manifest his presence, to give answers, and shew himself reconciled to the people; herein eminently prefiguring our blessed Saviour, who interposes between us and the Divine Majesty, "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood for the remission of sins," so that now "we may come boldly to the throne of grace, and find mercy to help us." Within the sanctuary, or the holy place, was the golden candlestick with seven branches, representing Christ, who is "the light of the world," and who "enlightens every one that comes into the world;" and before whose throne there are said to be "seven lamps of fire, which are the seven spirits of God:"^o the table, compassed about with a border and a crown of gold, denoting the ministry, and the shew-bread set upon it, shadowing out Christ, "the bread of life," who by the ministry of the gospel is offered to the world: here also was the golden altar of incense, whereon they burnt the sweet perfumes morning and evening, to signify to us that our Lord is the true altar, by whom all our prayers and services are rendered "the odour of a sweet smell acceptable unto God;" to this the psalmist refers,^p "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." The third part of the tabernacle, as also of the temple, was the court of Israel,

^a Isai. xi. 1, 10. Rom. xv. 12.^o Rev. iv. 5.^p Ps. cxli. 2.

wherein stood the brazen altar, upon which the holy fire was continually preserved, by which the sacrifices were consumed, one of the five great prerogatives that were wanting in the second temple. Here was the brazen laver, with its basis, made of the brazen looking-glasses of the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle, wherein the priests washed their hands and their feet, when going into the sanctuary, and both they and the people, when about to offer sacrifice; to teach us to purify our hearts and to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit," especially when we approach to offer up our services to heaven; hereunto David alludes,^a "I will wash mine hands in innocency, so will I compass thine altar, O Lord." Solomon, in building the temple, made an addition of a fourth court, the court of the Gentiles, whereinto the unclean Jews and Gentiles might enter; and in this was the corban, or treasury, and it is sometimes in the New Testament called the temple. To these laws concerning the place of worship we may reduce those that relate to the holy vessels and utensils of the tabernacle and the temple, candlesticks, snuffers, dishes, &c. which also had their proper mysteries and significations.

VII. The stated times and seasons of their worship are next to be considered, and they were either daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly. Their daily worship was at the time of the morning and evening sacrifice; their weekly solemnity was the sabbath, which was to be kept with all imaginable care and strictness, they being commanded to rest in it from all servile labours, and to attend the duties and offices of religion, a type of that "rest that remains for the people of God." Their monthly festivals were the new-moons, wherein they were to blow the trumpets over their sacrifices and oblations, and to observe them with great expressions of joy and triumph, in a thankful resentment of the blessings which all that month had been conferred upon them. Their annual solemnities were either ordinary or extraordinary: ordinary were those that returned every year, whereof the first was the passover, to be celebrated upon the fourteenth day of the first month, as a memorial of their great deliverance out of Egypt. The second, pentecost, called also the feast of weeks, because just seven weeks, or fifty days, after the passover: instituted it was partly in memory of the promulgation of the

^a Psalm xxvi. 6.

law, published at mount Sinai fifty days after their celebration of the passover in Egypt, partly as a thanksgiving for the ingathering of their harvest, which usually was fully brought in about this time. The third was the feast of tabernacles, kept upon the fifteenth day of the seventh month for the space of seven days together; at which time they dwelt in booths made of green boughs, as a memento of that time when they sojourned in tents and tabernacles in the wilderness, and a sensible demonstration of the transitory duration of the present life, that "the earthly house of our tabernacle must be dissolved," and that therefore "we should secure a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." These were the three great solemnities wherein all the males were obliged to appear at Jerusalem, and to present themselves and their offerings in testimony of their homage and devotion unto God: besides which they had some of lesser moment, such as their feast of trumpets, and that of expiation. The annual festivals extraordinary were those that recurred but once in the periodical return of several years; such was the sabbatical year, wherein the land was to lie fallow, and to rest from ploughing and sowing, and all manner of cultivation; and this was to be every seventh year, typifying the eternal sabbatism in heaven, where good men shall "rest from their labours, and their works shall follow them." But the great sabbatical year of all was that of jubilee, which returned at the end of seven ordinary sabbatic years, that is, every fiftieth year, the approach whereof was proclaimed by the sound of trumpets; in it servants were released, all debts discharged, and mortgaged estates reverted to their proper heirs. And how evidently did this shadow out the state of the gospel, and our Lord's being sent "to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to preach liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, that they might lift up their heads, because their redemption drew nigh."†

VIII. Lastly, they had laws concerning the persons by whom their public worship was administered; and here there was appointed an high-priest, who had his proper offices and rules of duty, his peculiar attire and consecration; ordinary priests, whose business was to instruct the people, to pray and offer

† Isai. lxi. 1, 2. Luk. iv. 18.

sacrifice, to bless the congregation and judge in cases of leprosy, and such like; at their ordination they were to be chosen before all the people, to be sprinkled with the water of expiation, their hair shaved, and their bodies washed, afterwards anointed, and sacrifices to be offered for them, and then they might enter upon their priestly ministrations. Next to these were the Levites, who were to assist the priests in preparing the sacrifices, to bear the tabernacle, (while it lasted,) and lay up its vessels and utensils, to purify and cleanse the vessels and instruments, to guard the courts and chambers of the temple, to watch weekly in the temple by their turns, to sing and celebrate the praises of God with hymns and musical instruments, and to join with the priests in judging and determining ceremonial causes; they were not to be taken into the full discharge of their function till the thirtieth, nor to be kept at it beyond the fiftieth year of their age; God mercifully thinking it fit to give them then a writ of ease, whose strength might be presumed sufficiently impaired by truckling for so many years under such toilsome and laborious ministrations. Though the Levitical priests were types of Christ, yet it was the high-priest who did eminently typify him, and that in the unity and singularity of his office; for though many orders and courses of inferior priests and ministers, yet was there but one high-priest, "there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus;" in the qualifications necessary to his election as to place, he was to be taken out of the tribe of Levi; as to his person, which was to be every way perfect and comely, and the manner of his consecration; in his singular capacity, that he alone might enter into the holy of holies, which he did once every year upon the great day of expiation, with a mighty pomp and train of ceremonies, killing sacrifices, burning incense, sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice before and upon the mercy-seat, going within the veil and making an atonement within the holy place: all which immediately referred to Christ, who "by the sacrifice of himself, and through the veil of his own flesh, entered," not into the holy place made with hands, but "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." All which might be represented more at large, but that I intend not a discourse about these matters.

IX. Besides the laws which we have hitherto enumerated, there were several other particular commands, ritual constitu-

tions about meats and drinks, and other parts of human life. Such was the difference they were to make between the creatures, some to be clean, and others unclean; such were several sorts of pollution and uncleanness, which were not in their own nature sins, but ceremonial defilements: of this kind were several provisions about apparel, diet, and the ordering family affairs, all evidently of a ceremonial aspect, but too long to be insisted on in this place. The main design of this ceremonial law was to point out to us the evangelical state: "the law had only a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things themselves, the body was Christ;"^a and therefore, though "the law came by Moses," yet "grace and truth" (the truth of all those types and figures) "came by Christ."^b It was time for Moses to resign the chair, when once this great prophet was come into the world. Ceremonies could no longer be of use when once the substance was at hand: well may the stars disappear at the rising of the sun: the "Messiah being cut off, should cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease." At the time of Christ's death, the veil of the temple, from top to bottom, rent in sunder, to shew that his death had revealed the mysteries, and destroyed the foundations of the legal economy, and put a period to the whole temple-ministration. Nay, the Jews themselves confess,^c that forty years before the destruction of the temple, (a date that corresponds exactly with the death of Christ,) the "lot did no more go up into the right hand of the priest," (this is meant of his dismissal of the scape-goat,) "nor the scarlet ribbon," usually laid upon the forehead of the goat, "any more grow white," (this was a sign that the goat was accepted for the remission of their sins,) "nor the evening lamp burn any longer, and that the gates of the temple opened of their own accord." By which, as at once, they confirm what the gospel reports of the opening of the *sanctum sanctorum* by the scissure of the veil; so they plainly confess, that at that very time their sacrifices and temple-services began to cease and fail; as indeed the reason of them then ceasing, the things themselves must needs vanish into nothing.

X. The third sort of laws given to the Jews were judicial and political; these were the municipal laws of the nation,

^a Heb. x. 1.

^b John i. 17.

^c Jom. cap. 4. fol. 39. ap. Buxtorf. Recens. Oper. Talm. p. 218.

enacted for the good of the state, and were a kind of appendage to the second table of the decalogue, as the ceremonial laws were of the first. They might be reduced to four general heads: such as respected men in their private and domestical capacities; concerning husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants: such as concerned the public and the commonwealth; relating to magistrates and courts of justice, to contracts and matters of right and wrong, to estates and inheritances, to executions and punishments, &c.: such as belonged to strangers, and matters of a foreign nature, as laws concerning peace and war, commerce and dealing with persons of another nation: or lastly, such as secured the honour and the interests of religion; laws against apostates and idolaters, wizards, conjurers, and false prophets, against blasphemy, sacrilege, and such like; all which, not being so proper to my purpose, I omit a more particular enumeration of them. These laws were peculiarly calculated for the Jewish state, and that while kept up in that country wherein God had placed them, and therefore must needs determine and expire with it. Nor can they be made a pattern and standard for the laws of other nations; for though proceeding from the wisest lawgiver, they cannot reasonably be imposed upon any state or kingdom, unless where there is an equal concurrence of circumstances, as there were in that people for whom God enacted them. They went off the stage with the Jewish polity, and if any parts of them do still remain obligatory, they bind not as judicial laws, but as branches of the law of nature, the reason of them being immutable and eternal. I know not whether it may here be useful to remark what the Jews so frequently tell us of, that the entire body of the Mosaic law consists of six hundred and thirteen precepts, intimated (say they) in that place where it is said "Moses commanded us a law,"^x where the numeral letters of the word תורה, or "law," make up the number of six hundred and eleven, and the two that are wanting to make up the complete number are the two first precepts of the decalogue, which were not given by Moses to the people, but immediately by God himself. Others say,^y that there are just six hundred and thirteen letters in the decalogue, and that every letter answers to a law: but some that have had the patience to tell them, assure us that there are two

^x Deut. xxxiii. 4.

^y Auth. Tzeror Hamor apud Vois. de Leg. Div. c. 23. p. 338.

whole words consisting of seven letters supernumerary, which in my mind quite spoils the computation. These six hundred and thirteen precepts they divide into two hundred and forty-eight affirmative, according to the number of the parts of man's body, (which they make account are just so many,) to put him in mind to serve God with all his bodily powers, as if every member of his body should say to him, עשה בי מצור, "make use of me to fulfil the command;"² and into three hundred and sixty-five negative, according to the number of the days of the year, that so every day may call upon a man, and say to him, לא תעשה בי עברה, "Oh, do not in me transgress the command:" or, as others will have it,³ they answer to the veins or nerves in the body of man; that as the complete frame and compages of man's body is made up of two hundred and forty-eight members and three hundred and sixty-five nerves, and the law of so many affirmative and so many negative precepts, it denotes to us, that the whole perfection and accomplishment of man lies in an accurate and diligent observance of the divine law. Each of these divisions they reduce under twelve houses, answerable to the twelve tribes of Israel. In the affirmative precepts, the first house is that of divine worship, consisting of twenty precepts; the second, the house of the sanctuary, containing nineteen; the third, the house of sacrifices, wherein are fifty-seven; the fourth, that of cleanness and pollution, containing eighteen; the fifth, of tithes and alms, under which are thirty-two; the sixth, of meats and drinks, containing seven; the seventh, of the pass-over, concerning feasts, containing twenty; the eighth, of judgment, thirteen; the ninth, of doctrine, twenty-five; the tenth, of marriage, and concerning women, twelve; the eleventh, of judgments criminal, eight; the twelfth, of civil judgments, seventeen. In the negative precepts, the first house is concerning the worship of the planets, containing forty-seven commands; the second, of separation from the heathens, thirteen; the third, concerning the reverence due to holy things, twenty-nine; the fourth, of sacrifice and priesthood, eighty-two; the fifth, of meats, thirty-eight; the sixth, of fields and harvest, eighteen; the seventh, of doctrine, forty-five; the eighth, of justice, forty-seven; the ninth, of feasts, ten; the tenth, of purity and

² R. Moyses Tract. de Num. præc. ap. Vois. ib.

³ Vid. Manass. Ben Israel de Resurr. l. ii. c. 18.

chastity, twenty-four; the eleventh, of wedlock, eight; the twelfth, concerning the kingdom, four: a method not contemptible, as which might minister to a distinct and useful explanation of the whole law of Moses.

XI. The next thing considerable under the Mosaical economy was the methods of the divine revelation, by what ways God communicated his mind to them, either concerning present emergencies or future events; and this was done, *πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως*, as the apostle tells us, "at sundry times," or by sundry degrees and parcels, and "in divers manners," by various methods of revelation; whereof three most considerable, the Urim and Thummim, the audible voice, and the spirit of prophecy, imparted in dreams, visions, &c. We shall make some brief remarks upon them, referring the reader, who desires fuller satisfaction herein, to those who purposely treat about these matters. The Urim and Thummim was a way of revelation peculiar to the high-priest: "Thou shalt put in the breast-plate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the Lord, and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually."^b Thus Eleazar the priest is commanded to "ask counsel after the judgment of Urim before the Lord."^c What this Urim and Thummim was, and what the manner of receiving answers by it, is difficult, if not impossible to tell, there being scarce any one difficulty that I know of in the Bible that hath more exercised the thoughts either of Jewish or Christian writers. Whether it was some addition to the high-priest's breast-plate made by the hand of some curious artist, or whether only those two words engraven upon it, or the great name Jehovah carved and put within the foldings of the breast-plate; or whether the twelve stones resplendent with light, and completed to perfection with the tribes' names therein; or whether some other mysterious piece of artifice immediately framed by the hand of heaven, and given to Moses when he delivered him the two tables of the law, is vain and endless to inquire, because impossible to determine. Nor is the manner of its giving answers less uncertain: whether at such times the fresh and orient lustre of the stones signified the answer in the affirmative, while their dull and dead colour spake the negative;

^b Exod. xxviii. 30.

^c Numb. xxvii. 21.

or whether it was by some extraordinary protuberancy and thrusting forth of the letters engraven upon the stones, from the conjunction whereof the divine oracle was gathered; or whether probably it might be, that when the high-priest inquired of God, with this breast-plate upon him, God did either by a lively voice, or by immediate suggestions to his mind, give him a distinct and perspicuous answer, illuminating his mind with the Urim, or the light of knowledge of his will in those cases, and satisfying his doubts and scruples with the Thummim, or a perfect and complete determination of those difficulties that were propounded to him, thereby enabling him to give a satisfactory and infallible answer in all the particulars that lay before him. And this several of the Jews seem to intend, when they make this way of revelation one of the degrees of the Holy Ghost, and say, that no sooner did the high-priest put on the pectoral, and had the case propounded to him, but that he was immediately clothed with the Holy Spirit. But it is to little purpose to hunt after that where fancy and conjecture must decide the case. Indeed, among the various conjectures about this matter, none appears with greater probability than the opinion of those who conceive the Urim and Thummim to have been a couple of teraphim,^d or little images, (probably formed in human shape,) put within the hollow foldings of the pontifical breast-plate, from whence God, by the ministry of an angel, vocally answered those interrogatories which the high-priest made: nothing being more common, even in the early ages of the world, than such teraphim in those Eastern countries, usually placed in their temples, and whence the demon was wont oracularly to determine the cases brought before him. And as God permitted the Jews the use of sacrifices, which had been notoriously abused to superstition and idolatry in the heathen world, so he might indulge them these teraphim, (though now converted to a sacred use,) that so he might by degrees wean them from the rites of the Gentile world, to which they had so fond an inclination. And this probably was the reason why, when Moses is so particular in describing the other parts of the sacerdotal ornaments, nothing at all is said of this, because a thing of common use among the nations with whom they had conversed, and notoriously known among themselves. And such we may suppose the prophet in-

^d Christoph. Castr. de Vaticin. l. iii. c. 3.

tended when he threatened the Jews, that they "should abide without a sacrifice, without an image, or altar, without an ephod, and without a teraphim."^e A notion very happily improved by an ingenious pen,^f whose acute conjectures and elaborate dissertations about this matter justly deserve commendation, even from those who differ from it. It seems to have been a kind of political oracle, and to be consulted only in great and weighty cases, as the election of supreme magistrates, making war, &c.; and only by persons of the highest rank, none being permitted (say the Jews^g) to inquire of it, אלו למלך ולבית, unless in a case wherein the king, or the sanhedrim, or the whole congregation was concerned.

XII. A second way of divine revelation was by an "audible voice," accompanied many times with thunder, descending as it were from heaven, and directing them in any emergency of affairs. This the Jewish writers call בַּת קוֹל, the "daughter" or echo "of a voice;" which they confess to have been the lowest kind of revelation, and to have been in use only in the times of the second temple, when all other ways of prophecy were ceased. But notwithstanding their common and confident assertions, whether ever there was any such standing way of revelation as this, is justly questionable, (nay, it is peremptorily denied by one incomparably versed in the Talmudic writings,^h who adds, that if there was any such thing at any time, it was done by magic arts and diabolical delusions,) partly, because it is only delivered by Jewish writers, whose faith and honesty is too well known to the world to be trusted in stories that make so much for the honour of their nation, not to mention their extravagant propension to lies and fabulous reports; partly, because by their own confession God had withdrawn all his standing oracles and ordinary ways of revelation, their notorious impieties having caused heaven to retire, and therefore much less would it correspond with them by such immediate converses; partly, because this seemed to be a way more accommodate to the evangelical dispensation at the appearance of the Son of God in the world. A voice from heaven is the most immediate testimony, and therefore fittest to do honour to him who came down from heaven, and was sure to meet with an obdurate and incredulous

^e Hos. iii. 4. ^f Joan. Spencer. Dissertat. de Urim et Thum. edit. Cantab. 1670.

^g Cod. Jom. c. vii. sect. 5. p. 167.

^h Lightf. Hor. Hebr. in Matth. iii. 17.

generation, and to give evidence to that doctrine that he published to the world. Thus by a bath-col, or a voice from heaven, God bare witness to our Saviour at his baptism, and a second time at his transfiguration, and again at the passover at Jerusalem, when there came a voice from heaven, which the people took for thunder, or the communication of an angel, and most of St. John's intelligences from above, recorded in his book of Revelation, are ushered in with an "I heard a voice from heaven."

XIII. But the most frequent and standing method of divine communications was that whereby God was wont to transact with the prophets, and in extraordinary cases with other men, which was either by dreams, visions, or immediate inspirations. The way by dreams was when the person being overtaken with a deep sleep, and all the exterior senses locked up, God presented the species and images of things to their understandings, and that in such a manner, that they might be able to apprehend the will of God, which they presently did upon their awaking out of sleep. These divine dreams the Jews distinguish into two sorts: monitory, such as were sent only by way of instruction and admonition, to give men notice of what they were to do, or warning of what they should avoid; such were the dreams of Pharaoh, Abimelech, Laban, &c.: or else they were prophetical, when God, by such a powerful energy acted upon the mind and imagination of the prophet, as carried the strength and force of a divine evidence along with it. This was sometimes done by a clear and distinct impression of the thing upon the mind without any dark or enigmatical representation of it, such as God made to Samuel, when he first revealed himself to him in the temple; sometimes by apparition, yet so as the man, though asleep, was able to discern an angel conversing with him. By visions, God usually communicated himself two ways: first, when something really appeared to the sight; thus Moses beheld the bush burning, and stood there while God conversed with him; Manoah and his wife saw the angel, while he took his leave, and in a flaming pyramid went up to heaven; the three angels appeared to Abraham a little before the fatal ruin of Sodom; all which apparitions were unquestionably true and real, the angel assuming an human shape, that he might the freelier converse with and deliver his message to those to whom he was sent. Secondly,

by powerful impressions upon the imagination, usually done while the prophet was awake, and had the free and uninterrupted exercise of his reason, though the vision oft overpowered, and cast him into a trance, that the soul being more retired from sensible objects might the closer intend those divine notices that were represented to it. Thus all the prophets had the ideas of those things that they were to deliver to the people the more strongly impressed upon their fancies, and this commonly when they were in the greatest solitude and privacy, and their powers most called in, that the prophetic influx might have the greater force upon them. In some such way St. Paul was caught up into the third heaven, probably not so much by any real separation of his soul from his body, or local translation of his spirit thither, as by a profound abstraction of it from his corporeal senses, God, during the time of the trance, entertaining it with an internal and admirable scene of the glory and happiness of that state, as truly and effectually as if his soul had been really conveyed thither.

XIV. Thirdly, God was wont to communicate his mind by immediate inspirations, whereby he immediately transacted with the understandings of men, without any relation to their fancy or their senses. It was the most pacate and serene way of prophecy, God imparting his mind to the prophets, not by dreams or visions, but while they were awake, their powers active, and their minds calm and undisturbed. This the Jews call *רוח הקדש*, "the Holy Spirit," or that kind of revelation that was directly conveyed into the mind by the most efficacious irradiation and inspiration of the Holy Spirit; God by these divine illapses enabling the prophet clearly and immediately to apprehend the things delivered to him. And in this way the *כתובים*, or "holy writings," were dictated and conveyed to the world;ⁱ in which respect the apostle says, that "all scripture is *θεόπνευστος*, given by divine inspiration." The highest pitch of this prophetic revelation was *נבואת משה*, the *gradus Mosaicus*, or that way of prophecy that God used towards Moses; of whom it is particularly said, that "the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend:"^k and elsewhere it is evidently distinguished from all inferior ways of prophecy, "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known

ⁱ Vide Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. par. ii. cap. 45. p. 317.

^k Exod. xxxiii. 11.

unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream: my servant Moses is not so, with him I will speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches, and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold:"¹ clearly implying a mighty pre-eminence in God's way of revelation to Moses above that of other prophets, which the Jewish writers make to have lain in four things. First, that in all God's communications to Moses, he immediately spake to his understanding, without any impressions upon fancy, any visible appearances, any dreams or visions of the night. Secondly, that Moses had prophecies conveyed to him without any fears or consternations, whereas the other prophets were astonished and weakened at the sight of God. Thirdly, that Moses had no previous dispositions or preparations to make him capable of the divine revelation, but could directly go to God and consult him, as "a man speaketh with his friend;" other prophets being forced many times by some preparatory arts to invite the prophetic spirit to come upon them. Fourthly, that Moses had a freedom and liberty of spirit to prophesy at all times, and could, when he pleased, have recourse to the sacred oracle. But as to this the scripture intimates no such thing, the spirit of prophecy retiring from him at some times as well as from the rest of the prophets. And indeed the prophetic spirit did not reside in the holy men by way of habit, but occasionally, as God saw fitting to pour it out upon them; it was not in them as light is in the sun, but as light is in the air, and consequently depended upon the immediate irradiations of the Spirit of God.

XV. These divine communications were so conveyed to the minds of the prophets and inspired persons, that they always knew them to be divine revelations; so mighty and perspicuous was the evidence that came along with them, that there could be no doubt, but they were the birth of heaven. It is true, when the prophetic spirit at any time seized upon wicked men, they understood not its effect upon them, nor were in the least improved and bettered by it; the revelation passed through them, as a sound through a trunk, or water through a leaden pipe, without any particular and distinct apprehension of the thing, or useful impression made upon their minds; as is evident, besides others, in the case of Caiaphas and Balaam, of which last

¹ Numb. xii. 6, 7, 8.

the Jews say expressly, נבא בר צין אלהים ולא דע מנבי, that "he prophesied according to the will of God, but understood not what he prophesied." But it was otherwise with the true prophets; they always knew who it was that acted them, and what was the meaning of that intelligence that was communicated to them. In the Gentile world, when the demon entered into the inspired person, he was usually carried out to the furious transports of rage and madness. But in the prophets of God, although the impulse might sometimes be very strong and violent, (whence the prophet Jeremy complains, "Mine heart within me is broken, all my bones shake, I am like a drunken man, like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the Lord, and because of the words of his holiness,") so as a little to ruffle their imagination, yet never so as to discompose their reason, or hinder them from a clear perception of the notices conveyed upon their minds; *ὁ προφήτης μετὰ καταστάσεως λογισμῶν, καὶ παρακολουθήσεως ἐλάλει, καὶ ἐφθέγγετο ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου, τὰ πάντα ἐρῶμένως λέγων*, says Epiphanius:^m "the prophet had his oracles dictated by the Holy Spirit, which he delivered strenuously, and with the most firm and unshaken consistency of his rational powers;" and afterwards, *γεγόνاسι δὲ ἐν ἐκστάσει οἱ προφῆται, οὐκ ἐν ἐκστάσει λογισμῶν*, "that the prophets were often in a bodily ecstasy, but never in an ecstasy of mind," their understandings never being rendered useless and unserviceable to them. Indeed, it was absolutely necessary that the prophet should have a full satisfaction of mind concerning the truth and divinity of his message; for how else should they persuade others that the thing was from God, if they were not first sufficiently assured themselves? and, therefore, even in those methods that were most liable to doubts and questions, such as communications by dreams, we cannot think but that the same spirit that moved and impressed the thing upon them, did also, by some secret and inward operations, settle their minds in the firmest belief and persuasion of what was revealed and suggested to them. All these ways of immediate revelation ceased some hundreds of years before the final period of the Jewish church: a thing confessed not only by Christians, but by Jews themselves; *לֹא הָיָה נְבִיא בְּבֵית שְׁנֵי*,

^m Adv. Montan. Hæres. xlviii. s. 3.

ⁿ Ibid. s. 7.

^o Nizz. p. 159. citante Hotting. Thes. Phil. l. ii. c. 3. p. 564.

“there was no prophet in the second temple;” indeed they universally acknowledge, that there were five things wanting in the second temple, built after their return from the Babylonish captivity, which had been in that of Solomon; viz. the ark of the covenant, the fire from heaven that lay upon the altar, the Shechinah, or presence of the divine majesty, the Urim and Thummim, and the spirit of prophecy, which ceased (as they tell us) about the second year of Darius; to be sure at the death of Malachi, the last of that order, after whom there arose no prophet in Israel, whom therefore the Jews call, חותם הנביאים, “the seal of the prophets.” Indeed it is no wonder that prophecy should cease at that time, if we consider that one of the prime ends of it did then cease, which was to be a seal and an assurance of the divine inspiration of the holy volumes; now the canon of the Old Testament being consigned and completed by Ezra, with the assistance of Malachi, and some of the last prophets, God did not think good any longer to continue this divine and miraculous gift among them: but especially, if we consider the great degeneracy into which that church was falling, their horrid and crying sins having made God resolve to reject them, the departure of the prophetic spirit shewed that God had written them a bill of divorce, and would utterly cast them off; that by this means they might be awakened to a more lively expectation of that new state of things, which the Messiah was coming to establish in the world, wherein the prophetic spirit should revive, and be again restored to the church, which accordingly came to pass, as we shall elsewhere observe.

XVI. The third thing propounded, was to consider the state of religion and the church under the successive periods of this economy. And here we shall only make some general remarks; a particular survey of those matters not consisting with the design of this discourse. Ecclesiastical constitutions being made in the wilderness, and the place for public worship framed and erected, no sooner did they come into the promised land, but the tabernacle was set down at Gilgal, where, if the Jewish chronology say true, it continued fourteen years, till they had subdued and divided the land; then fixed at Shiloh, and the priests and Levites had cities and territories assigned to them, where it is not to be doubted but there were synagogues, or

places equivalent, for prayer and the ordinary solemnities of religion, and courts for the decision of ecclesiastical causes. Prosperity and a plentiful country had greatly contributed to the depravation of men's manners, and the corruption of religion, till the times of Samuel, the great reformer of that church, who erected colleges and instituted schools of the prophets, reduced the societies of the Levites to their primitive order and purity, forced the priests to do their duty, diligently to minister in the affairs of God's worship, and carefully to teach and instruct the people: a piece of reformation no more than necessary, "for the word of the Lord was precious in those days, there was no open vision." Three hundred and sixty-nine years (say the Jews) the tabernacle abode at Shiloh, from whence it was translated to Nob, a city in the tribe of Benjamin, probably about the time that the ark was taken; thence, after thirteen years, to Gibeon, where it remained fifty years; and lastly by Solomon to Jerusalem. The ark being taken to carry along with them for their more prosperous success in their war against the Philistines, was ever after exposed to an ambulatory and unsettled course: for being taken captive by the Philistines, it was by them kept prisoner seven months; thence removed to Bethshemesh, and thence to Kirjath-jearim, where it remained in the house of Abinadab twenty years; thence solemnly fetched by David, and after three months rest by the way in the house of Obed-Edom, brought triumphantly to Jerusalem, and placed under the covert of a tent which he had purposely erected for it. David being settled in the throne, like a pious prince took especial care of the affairs of religion: he fixed the high-priest and his second, augmented the courses of the priests from eight to four and twenty, appointed the Levites and singers and their several turns and times of waiting, assigned them their proper duties and ministeries, settled the *nethinim* or porters, the posterity of the Gibeonites; made treasurers of the revenues belonging to holy uses, and of the vast sums contributed toward the building of a temple, as a more solemn and stately place for divine worship, which he was fully resolved to have erected, but that God commanded it to be reserved for the peaceable and prosperous reign of Solomon; who succeeding in his father's throne, accomplished it, building so stately and magnificent a temple, that it became one of the greatest wonders of the world.

Under his son Rehoboam happened the fatal division of the kingdom, when ten parts of twelve were rent off at once, and brought under the empire of Jeroboam, who knew no better way to secure his new-gotten sovereignty, than to take off the people from hankering after the temple and the worship at Jerusalem; and therefore, out of a cursed policy, erected two golden calves at Dan and Bethel, persuading the people there to pay their public adorations, appointing chaplains like himself, priests of the lowest of the people: and from this time religion began visibly to ebb and decline in that kingdom, and idolatry to get ground amongst them.

XVII. The two tribes of Judah and Benjamin were loyal both to God and their prince, continuing obedient to their lawful sovereign, and firmly adhering to the worship of the temple, though even here too impiety in some places maintained its ground, having taken root in the reign of Solomon, who, through his over-great partiality and fondness to his wives, had been betrayed to give too much countenance to idolatry. The extirpation hereof was the design and attempt of all the pious and good princes of Judah: Jehosaphat set himself in good earnest to recover religion and the state of the church to its ancient purity and lustre; he abolished the groves and high places, and appointed itinerant priests and Levites to go from city to city to expound the law, and instruct the people in the knowledge of their duty; nay, he himself held a royal visitation, "going quite through the land, and bringing back the people to the Lord God of their fathers."^p But under the succeeding kings religion again lost its ground, and had been quite extinct during the tyranny and usurpation of Athaliah, but that good Jehoiada, the high-priest, kept it alive by his admirable zeal and industry. While he lived, his pupil Joas (who owed both his crown and life to him) promoted the design, and purged the temple, though after his tutor's death he apostatized to profaneness and idolatry. Nor indeed was the reformation effectually advanced till the time of Hezekiah, who no sooner ascended the throne, but he summoned the priests and Levites, exhorted them to begin at home, and first to reform themselves, then to cleanse and repair the temple; he resettled the priests and Levites in their proper places and offices, and caused them to offer all sorts of sacrifices,

^p 2 Chron. xix. 4.

and the passover to be universally celebrated with great strictness and solemnity; he destroyed the monuments of idolatry, "took away the altars in Jerusalem," and having given commission, the people did the like in all parts of the kingdom, breaking the images, cutting down the groves, throwing down the altars and high places, "until they had utterly destroyed them all." But neither greatness nor piety can exempt any from the common laws of mortality: Hezekiah dies, and his son Manasseh succeeds, a wicked prince, under whose influence impiety like a land-flood broke in upon religion, and laid all waste before it. But his grandchild Josiah made some amends, he gave signal instances of an early piety; for in the eighth year of his reign, "while he was yet young," he began "to seek after the God of David his father,"^q and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem; he defaced whatever had been abused and prostituted to idolatry and superstition throughout the whole kingdom, repaired God's house, and ordered its worship according to the prescript of the Mosaic law, a copy whereof they had found in the ruins of the temple, solemnly engaged himself and his people to be true to religion and the worship of God, and caused so great and solemn a passover to be held, that "there was no passover like to it kept in Israel from the days of Samuel." And more he had done, had not an immature death cut him off in the midst both of his days and his pious designs and projects. Not many years after, God being highly provoked by the prodigious impieties of that nation, delivered it up to the army of the king of Babylon, who demolished the city, harassed the land, and carried the people captive unto Babylon. And no wonder the divine patience could hold no longer, when "all the chief of the priests and the people transgressed very much, after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the house of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem."^r Seventy years they remained under this captivity, during which time the prophet Daniel gave lively and particular accounts of the Messiah, that he should come into the world to introduce a law of "everlasting righteousness," to die as a sacrifice and expiation for the sins of the people, and to put a period to the Levitical sacrifices and oblations. And whereas other prophecies had only in general defined the time

^q 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3.

^r 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14.

of the Messiah's coming, he particularly determines the period, that all this should be at the end of seventy weeks; that is, at the expiration of four hundred and ninety years; which exactly fell in with the time of our Saviour's appearing in the world. The seventy years captivity being run out, by the favour of the king of Babylon they were set free, and by him permitted and assisted to repair Jerusalem and rebuild the temple, which was accordingly done under the government of Nehemiah and the succeeding rulers, and the temple finished by Zorobabel, and things brought into some tolerable state of order and decency, and so continued till the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, by whom the temple was profaned and violated, and the Jewish church miserably afflicted and distressed; he thrust out Onias the high-priest, and put in his brother Jason, a man lost both to religion and good manners, and who, by a vast sum of money, had purchased the priesthood of Antiochus. At this time Matthias, a priest, and the head of the Asmonæan family, stood up for his country; after whom came Judas Maccabæus, *ἀνὴρ γενναῖος καὶ μεγαλοπόλεμος, καὶ πάνθ' ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν πολιτῶν ἐλευθερίας καὶ δρᾶσαι καὶ παθεῖν ὑποστάς*, as Josephus truly characterizes him,* "a man of a generous temper, and a valiant mind, ready to do or suffer any thing to assert the liberties and religion of his country," followed both in his zeal and prosperous success by his two brothers Jonathan and Simon, successively high-priests and commanders after him. Next him came John, surnamed Hyrcanus; then Aristobulus, Alexander, Hyrcanus, Aristobulus junior, Alexander, Antigonus; in whose time Herod the Great having, by the favour of Antony, obtained of the Roman senate the sovereignty over the Jewish nation, and being willing that the priesthood should entirely depend upon his arbitrary disposure, abrogated the succession of the Asmonæan family, and put in one Ananel, *ιερέα τῶν ἀσημοτέρων*, as Josephus calls him,† "an obscure priest," of the line of those who had been priests in Babylon. To him succeeded Aristobulus; to him Jesus the son of Phabes; to him Simon, who being deposed, next came Matthias, deposed also by Herod; next him Joazar, who underwent the same fate from Archelaus; then Jesus the son of Sie; after whom Joazar was again restored to the chair, and under his pontificate (though

* Antiq. Jud. l. xii. c. 19.

† Ibid. l. xv. c. 2.

before his first deposition) Christ was born; things every day growing worse among them, till about seventy years after the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost, and brought the Romans, who finally took away their place and nation.

XVIII. Before we go off from this part of our discourse, it may not be amiss to take a more particular view of the state of the Jewish church, as it stood at the time of our Saviour's appearing in the world, as what may reflect some considerable light upon the history of Christ and his apostles. And if we cast our eyes upon it at this time, "how was the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed!" how miserably deformed was the face of the church, how strangely degenerated from its primitive institution! whereof we shall observe some particular instances. Their temple, though lately repaired and rebuilt by Herod, and that with so much pomp and grandeur, that Josephus,^u who yet may justly be presumed partial to the honour of his own nation, says of it, that it was the most admirable structure that was ever seen or heard of, both for the preparation made for it, the greatness and magnificence of the thing itself, and the infinite expense and cost bestowed upon it, as well as for the glory of that divine worship that was performed in it; yet was it infinitely short of that of Solomon; besides that it had been often exposed to rudeness and violence. Not to mention the horrible profanations of Antiochus, it had been of late invaded by Pompey, who boldly ventured into the *sanctum sanctorum*, and without any scruple curiously contemplated the mysteries of that place, but suffered no injury to be offered to it. After him came Crassus, who to the other's boldness added sacrilege, seizing what the other's piety and modesty had spared, plundering the temple of its vast wealth and treasure. Herod having procured the kingdom, besieged and took the city and the temple; and though, to ingratiate himself with the people, he endeavoured what in him lay to secure it from rapine and impiety, and afterwards expended incredible sums in its reparation, yet did he not stick to make it truckle under his wicked policies and designs. The more to endear himself to his patrons at Rome,^x he set up a golden eagle of a vast dimension (the arms of the Roman empire) over the great gate

^u De Bell. Jud. l. vii. c. 27.

^x Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xvii. c. 8. et de Bell. Jud. l. i. c. 21.

of the temple; a thing so expressly contrary to the law of Moses, which forbids all images, and accounted so monstrous a profanation of that holy place, that while Herod lay a dying, the people, in a great tumult and uproar, gathered together and pulled it down. A great part of it was become an exchange and a market; the place where men were to meet with God, and to trade with heaven, was now turned into a warehouse for merchants and a shop for usurers, and "the house of prayer into a den of thieves." The worship formerly wont to be performed there with pious and devout affections, was now shrunk into a mere shell and outside; they "drew near to God with their mouths, and honoured him with their lips, but their hearts were far from him;" rites of human invention had jostled out those of divine institution, and their very prayers were made traps to catch the unwary people, and to devour the widow and the fatherless. Their priesthood was so changed and altered, that it retained little but its ancient name; the high priests, who by their original charter were lineally to succeed, and to hold their place for life, were become almost annual, scarce a year passing over wherein one was not thrust out and another put in: *ὑπὸ τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν ἡγεμόνων ἄλλοτ' ἄλλοι ἀρχιερωσύνην ἐπιτρεπόμενοι, οὐ πλείον ἔτους ἐνὸς ἐπὶ ταύτης διετέλουν*, as Eusebius notes out of their own historian.¹ Nay, which was far worse, it was become not only annual but venal, Herod exposing it to sale, and scarce admitting any to the sacerdotal office, who had not first sufficiently paid for his patent; and, which was the natural consequence of that, the place was filled with the refuse of the people, men of mean abilities and debauched manners, who had neither parts nor piety to recommend them, he being the best and the fittest man that offered most. Nay, into so strange a degeneracy were they fallen in this matter, that Josephus reports,² that one Phannias was elected high-priest, not only a rustic and illiterate fellow, not only not of the sacerdotal line, but so intolerably stupid and ignorant, that when they came to acquaint him, he knew not what the high-priesthood meant. And not content to be imposed upon, and tyrannized over by a foreign power, they fell a quarrelling among themselves, and mutually preyed upon one another:³ the high-priests falling out with the inferior orders, and both parties

¹ Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 10.² De Bell. Jud. l. iv. c. 12.³ Joseph. Antiq. l. xx. c. 8.

going with an armed retinue after them, ready to clash and fight wherever they met; the high-priest sending his servants to fetch away the tithes due to the inferior priests, insomuch that many of the poorest of them were famished for want of necessary food.

XIX. Their law, which had been delivered with so much majesty and magnificence, and for which they themselves pretended so great a reverence, they had miserably corrupted and depraved, (the moral part of it especially,) and that two ways. First, by gross and absurd interpretations, which the teachers of those times had put upon it. The scribes and pharisees, who ruled the chair in the Jewish church, had by false and corrupt glosses debased the majesty and purity of the law, and made it to serve the purposes of an evil life: they had taught the people, that the law required no more than external righteousness; that if there was but a visible conformity of the life, they needed not be solicitous about the government of their minds, or the regular conduct of their thoughts or passions; that so men did but carry themselves fair to the eye of the world, it was no great matter how things went in the secret and unseen retirements of the soul; nay, that a punctual observance of some external precepts of the law would compensate and quit scores with God for the neglect or violation of the rest. They told men, that when the law forbid murder, so they did not actually kill another, and sheath their sword in their brother's bowels, it was well enough; men were not restrained from furious and intemperate passions; they might be angry, yea, though by peevish and uncomely speeches they betrayed the rancour and malice of their minds. They confessed the law made it adultery actually to embrace the bosom of a stranger, but would not have it extend to wanton thoughts and unchaste desires, or that it was adultery for a man to lust after a woman, and to commit folly with her in his heart. They told them, that in all oaths and vows, if they did but perform what they had sworn to God, the law took no farther notice of it, whenas every vain and unnecessary oath, all customary and trifling use of the name of God, was forbidden by it. They made them believe that it was lawful for them to proceed by the rigorous law of retaliation, to exact their own to the utmost, and to right and revenge themselves; whenas the law requires a tender, compassionate, and

benevolent temper of mind, and is so far from owning the rigorous punctilios of revenge, that it obliges to meekness and patience, to forgiveness and charity, and, which is the very height of charity, not only to pardon, but to love and befriend our greatest enemies, quite contrary to the doctrine which these men taught, that though they were to love their neighbours, that is, Jews, yet might they hate their enemies. In these and such-like instances, they had notoriously abused and evacuated the law, and in a manner rendered it of no effect: and therefore when our Lord, as the great prophet sent from God, came into the world, the first thing he did after the entrance upon his public ministry, was to cleanse and purify the law, and to remove that rubbish which the Jewish doctors had cast upon it. He rescued it out of the hands of their poisonous and pernicious expositions, restored it to its just authority, and to its own primitive sense and meaning; he taught them, that the law did not only bind the external act, but prescribe to the most inward motions of the mind, and that whoever transgresses here, is no less obnoxious to the divine justice, and the penalties of the law, than he that is guilty of the most gross and palpable violations of it: he shewed them how infinitely more pure and strict the command was than these impostors had represented it; and plainly told them, that if ever they expected to be happy, they must look upon the law with another-guise eye, and follow it after another rate, than their blind and deceitful guides did; “for I say unto you, Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye can in no case enter into the kingdom of God.”

XX. The other way by which they corrupted and dishonoured the law, and weakened the power and reputation of it, was by preferring before it their oral and unwritten law. For besides the law consigned to writing, they had their *תורה שבעל פה*, “their law delivered by word of mouth,” whose pedigree they thus deduce. They tell us, that when Moses waited upon God forty days in the mount, he gave him a double law, one in writing, the other traditionary, containing the sense and explication of the former: being come down into his tent, he repeated it first to Aaron, then to Ithamar and Eleazar his sons, then to the seventy elders, and lastly to all the people, the same persons being all this while present. Aaron, who had now heard it four times

recited, Moses being gone out, again repeated it before them : after his departure out of the tent, his two sons, who by this had heard it as oft as their father, made another repetition of it, by which means the seventy elders came to hear it four times ; and then they also repeated it to the congregation, who had now also heard it repeated four times together, once from Moses, then from Aaron, then from his sons, and lastly from the seventy elders ; after which the congregation broke up, and every one went home and taught it his neighbour. ^bThis oral law Moses upon his death-bed repeated to Joshua, he delivered it to the elders, they to the prophets, the prophets to the men of the great synagogue, the last of whom was Simeon the Just, who delivered it to Antigonus Sochæus, and he to his successors, the wise men, whose business it was to recite it, and so it was handed through several generations ; the names of the persons who delivered it in the several ages, from its first rise under Moses till above an hundred years after Christ, being particularly enumerated by Maimonides. At last it came to R. Jehuda,^c commonly styled by the Jews רבנו הקדוש, “ our holy master,” the son of Rabban Simeon, (who flourished a little before the time of the emperor Antoninus,) who, considering the unsettled and tottering condition of his own nation, and how apt these traditionary precepts would be to be forgotten or mistaken by the weakness of men’s memories, or the perverseness of their wits, or the dispersion of the Jews in other countries, collected all these laws and expositions, and committed them to writing, styling his book *Mishnaïoth*, or the “ repetition.” This was afterwards illustrated and explained by the Rabbins dwelling about Babylon, with infinite cases and controversies concerning their law, whose resolutions were at last compiled into another volume, which they called *Gemara*, or “ doctrine,” and both together constitute the entire body of the Babylonish Talmud, the one being the text, the other the comment. The folly and vanity of this account, though it be sufficiently evident to need no confutation with any wise and discerning man, yet have the Jews in all ages made great advantage of it, magnifying and extolling it above the written law, with titles and elogies that hyperbolize into blasphemy. They tell

^b Pirk. Aboth. c. i. s. 1, 2, 3. p. 1.

^c Jad. Chazak. ex quo loc. satis prolixum citat. Jos. Vois. de leg. div. c. 9. et seqq. ubi varias Judæorum de Legis hujus origine et successione sententias videre est.

us,^d that this is עיקר התורה, “the foundation of the law,” for whose sake it was that God entered into covenant with the Israelites : that without this the whole law would lie in the dark ; yea, be mere obscurity and darkness itself, as being contrary and repugnant to itself, and defective in things necessary to be known : that it is joy to the heart and health to the bones ; that the words of it are more lovely and desirable than the words of the law, and a greater sin to violate the one than the other ; that it is little or no commendation for a man to read the Bible, but to study the Mishna is that for which a man shall receive a reward of the other world ; and that no man can have a peaceable and quiet conscience, who leaves the study of the Talmud to go to that of the Bible ; that the Bible is like water, the Mishna like wine, the Talmud like spiced wine ; that all the words of the Rabbins are the very words of the living God, from which a man might not depart, though they should tell him his right hand were his left, and his left his right ; nay, they blush not nor tremble to assert, שגם העסק במקרא הוא אבוד הזמן, that “to study in the Holy Bible is nothing else but to lose our time.” I will mention but one bold and blasphemous sentence more, that we may see how far these desperate wretches are given over to a spirit of impiety and infatuation : they tell us, that he that dissents from his Rabbin, or teacher, בחלק על השכינה והמאמץ כדברי חכמים נמאמץ בשכינה, “dissents from the divine majesty, but he that believes the words of the wise men, believes God himself.”

XXI. Strange ! that men should so far offer violence to their reason, so far conquer and subdue their conscience, as to be able to talk at this wild and prodigious rate : and strange it would seem, but that we know a generation of men, great patrons of tradition too, in another church, who mainly endeavour to debase and suppress the scriptures, and value their unwritten traditions at little less rate than this. But I let them pass. This is no novel and upstart humour of the Jews ; they were notoriously guilty of it in our Saviour’s days, whom we find frequently charging them with their superstitious observances of many little rites and usages derived from the traditions of the elders, wherein they placed the main of religion, and for which they had a far more sacred regard than for the plain

^d Vid. Buxtorf. de Abbrev. p. 222. et de Synag. Jud. c. 3. Hotting. Thes. Phil. l. ii. c. 3.

and positive commands of God. Such were their frequent washings of their pots and cups, their brazen vessels and tables,^f the purifying themselves after they came from market, (as if the touching of others had defiled them,) the washing their hands before every meal, and “many other things which they had received to hold.” In all which they were infinitely nice and scrupulous, making the neglect of them of equal guilt with the greatest immorality; not sticking to affirm, that he who eats bread with unwashen hands,^f כֹּאִלּוּ בָא עַל אִשָּׁה וְזוֹנָה, “is as if he lay with an harlot.” This, it is plain, they thought a sufficient charge against our Lord’s disciples, that they were not zealous observers of these things. “When they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, they found fault; and asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?” To whom our Saviour smartly answered, that they were the persons of whom the prophet had spoken, who “honoured God with their lips, but their hearts were far from him; that in vain did they worship him, while for doctrines they taught the commandments of men, laying aside and rejecting the commandments of God, that they might hold the tradition of men.” For they were not content to make them of equal value and authority with the word of God, but made them a means wholly to evacuate and supersede it. Whereof our Lord gives a notorious instance in the case of parents. They could not say but that the law obliged children to honour and revere their parents, and to administer to their necessities in all straits and exigencies; but they had found out a fine way to evade the force of the command, and that under a pious and plausible pretence. “Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother: and whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is *Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall be free: and ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or mother:” by which is commonly understood, that when their parents required relief and assistance from their children, they put them off with this ex-

* Mark vii. 2, 3. et seqq.

^f Matth. xv. 1. Talm. Tr. Sota, cap. 1. vid. Buxtorf. Syn. Jud. c. 11. p. 236. Mark vii. 2—5.

cuse, that they had consecrated their estate to God, and might not divert it to any other use. Though this seems a specious and plausible pretence, yet it is not reasonable to suppose that either they had, or would pretend that they had, entirely devoted whatever they had to God, and must therefore refer to some other custom. Now among the many kinds of oaths and vows that were among the Jews, they had one which they called נדר איסור, "the vow of interdict,"^s whereby a man might restrain himself as to this or that particular person, and this or that particular thing; as, he might vow not to accept of such a courtesy from this friend or that neighbour, or that he would not part with this or that thing of his own to such a man, to lend him his horse, or give him any thing towards his maintenance, &c. and then the thing became utterly unlawful, and might not be done upon any consideration whatsoever, lest the man became guilty of the violation of his vow. The form of this vow frequently occurs in the Jewish writings, and even in the very same words wherein our Lord expresses it, קרבן שאני, נהדרו לך, "be it corban, or a gift, (that is, a thing sacred,) whereby I may be any ways profitable to thee;" that is, be that thing unlawful or prohibited to me, wherein I may be helpful and assistant to thee. And nothing more common than this way of vowing in the particular case of parents, whereof there are abundant instances in the writings of the Jewish masters, who thus explain the forementioned vow, דקורש יחא כל מה שאני עושרו, מלכו על פי אבא, "whatever I shall gain hereafter shall be sacred, as to the maintenance of my father;" or, as Maimonides expresses it, "that what I provide, my father shall eat nothing of it," that is, says he, "he shall receive no profit by it;" and then, as they tell us, יקום אינו יכול להפר, "he that had thus vowed, might not transgress or make void his vow." So that when indigent parents craved relief and assistance from their children, and probably wearied them with importunity, it was but vowing in a passionate resentment, that they should not be better for what they had, and then they were safe, and might no more dispose any part of their estate to that use, than they might touch the *corban*, that which was most solemnly consecrated to God. By which means they were taught to be unnatural under

^s Vid. Lud. Cappell. diatrib. de Corban. Grot. Annot. in Matth. xv. 5.- Coccei. in Excerpt. Gemar. Sanhed. p. 273. Hotting. Thes. Phil. l. i. c. 1. sect. 5. p. 31.

a pretence of religion, and to suffer their parents to starve, lest themselves should violate a senseless and unlawful vow. So that though they were under the precedent obligations of a natural duty, a duty as clearly commanded by God as words could express it, yet a blind tradition, a rash and impious vow, made for the most part out of passion or covetousness, should cancel and supersede all these obligations; it being unlawful henceforth to give them one penny to relieve them: "Ye suffer him no more (says our Lord) to do aught for his father or his mother, making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered."

XXII. The last instance that I shall note of the corruption and degeneracy of this church, is the many sects and divisions that were in it; a thing which the Jews themselves in their writings confess would happen in the days of the Messiah, whose kingdom should be overrun with heretical opinions. That church which heretofore, like Jerusalem, had been "at unity within itself," was now miserably broken into sects and factions; whereof three most considerable, Pharisees, Sadducees, and the Essenes. The Pharisees derive their name from פָּרִישִׁי, which may admit of a double signification, and either not unsuitable to them: it may refer to them as פִּרְשֵׁי, "explainers" or interpreters of the law, which was a peculiar part of their work, and for which they were famous and venerable among the Jews; or more probably to their separation, (the most proper and natural importance of the word,) so called, διὰ τὸ ἀφωρισμένους εἶναι αὐτοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων, as Epiphanius observed of old,^h because separated from all others in their extraordinary pretences of piety, the very Jews themselves thus describing a Pharisee:ⁱ he is one שֶׁפִּרְשׁ עַצְמוֹ מִכָּל טִמְאָה, "that separates himself from all uncleanness, and from all unclean meats, and from the people of the earth," (the common rout,) "who accurately observe not the difference of meats." It is not certain when this sect first thrust up its head into the world, probably not long after the times of the Maccabees; it is certain they were of considerable standing, and great account in the time of our Saviour: to be sure, strangely wide of the mark are those Jewish chronologists who say,^k that the sect of the Pharisees arose in the times of Tiberius

^h Hæres. xvi. s. l.

ⁱ Baal Aruch in voc. פָּרִישִׁי.

^k R. Ged Schal. Kabb. p. 104. citante Hotting. Thes. Phil. l. i. c. 1. p. 27.

Cæsar and Ptolemy the Egyptian, under whom the Septuagint translation was accomplished; as if Ptolemy Philadelphus and Tiberius Cæsar had been contemporaries, between whom there is the distance of no less than two hundred and sixty years. But whenever it began, a bold and daring sect it was, not fearing to affront princes and persons of the greatest quality, crafty and insinuating, and who by a shew of great zeal and infinite strictness in religion, beyond the rate of other men, had procured themselves a mighty reverence from the people; so strict, that (as a learned man observes^l) Pharisee is used in the Talmudick writings to denote a pious and holy man; and Benjamin the Jew, speaking of R. Ascher, says,^m he was דפּרש שפּרש, "a truly devout man, separate from the affairs of this world." And yet under all this seeming severity they were but religious villains, spiteful and malicious, griping and covetous, great oppressors, merciless dealers, heady and seditious, proud and scornful, indeed guilty of most kinds of immorality; of whose temper and manners I say the less in this place, having elsewhere given an account of them. They held that the oral law was of infinitely greater moment and value than the written word; that the traditions of their forefathers were above all things to be embraced and followed, the strict observance whereof would entitle a man to eternal life;ⁿ that the souls of men are immortal, and had their dooms awarded in the subterraneous regions; that there is a *metempsychosis*, or transmigration of pious souls out of one body into another; that things come to pass by fate, and an inevitable necessity, and yet that man's will is free, that by this means men might be rewarded and punished according to their works. I add no more concerning them, than that some great men of the church of Rome say, with some kind of boasting, that such as were the Pharisees among the Jews, such are the religious (they mean the monastical orders of their church) among Christians. Much good may it do them with the comparison, I confess myself so far of their mind, that there is too great a conformity between them.

XXIII. Next the Pharisees come the Sadducees, as opposite to them in their temper as their principles; so called (as Epiphanius and some others will have it) from צדק, "justice," as

^l L'Emper. not. in Benjam.

^m Itiner. p. 147. Ibid. p. 6.

ⁿ Vid. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xviii. c. 2. et de Bell. Jud. l. ii. c. 12.

pretending themselves to be very just and righteous men, but this agrees not with the account given of their lives. They are generally thought to have been denominated from Sadoc, the scholar of Antigonus Sochæus, who flourished about the year of the world 3720, two hundred and eighty-four years before the nativity of our Saviour. They pass under a very ill character even among the writers of their own nation, רשעים ובעלי מרות רעות, "impious men, and of very loose and debauched manners:" which is no more than what might be expected as the natural consequence of their principles, this being one of their main *dogmata* or opinions, that the soul is not immortal, and that there is no future state after this life. The occasion of which desperate principle is said to have been a mistake of the doctrine of their master, Antigonus,^o who was wont to press his scholars not to be like mercenary servants, who serve their masters merely for what they can get by them; but to serve God for himself, without expectation of rewards. This, Sadoc and Baithos, two of his disciples, misunderstanding, thought their master had peremptorily denied any state of future rewards; and having laid this dangerous foundation, these unhappy superstructures were built upon it: that there is no resurrection; for if there be no reward, what need that the body should rise again? that the soul is not immortal, nor exists in the separate state, for if it did, it must be either rewarded or punished; and if not the soul, then by the same proportion of reason, no spiritual substance, neither angel nor spirit; that there is no Divine Providence, but that God is perfectly placed as beyond the commission, so beyond the inspection and regard of what sins or evils are done or happen in the world; ^p as, indeed, what great reason to believe a wise and righteous Providence, if there be no reward or punishment for virtue and vice in another life? These pernicious and atheistical opinions justly exposed them to the reproach and hatred of the people, who were wont eminently to style them מניס, "the heretics, infidels, epicureans," no words being thought bad enough to bestow upon them. They rejected the traditions so vehemently asserted by the Pharisees, and taught that men were to keep to the letter of the law, and that nothing was to be imposed either upon their behalf or practice, but what was expressly owned and contained in it. Josephus observes, that they were

^o Pirk. Aboth. c. i. s. 3. p. m. 1.

^p Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. ii. c. 12.

the fewest of all the sects,^q *πρῶτοι δὲ τοῖς ἀξιώμασι*, but usually men of the better rank and quality; as what wonder, if rich and great men, who tumble in the pleasures and advantages of a prosperous fortune, be willing to take sanctuary at those opinions that afford the greatest patronage to looseness and debauchery, and care not to hear of being called to account in another world for what they have done in this? For this reason the Sadducees ever appeared the greatest sticklers to preserve the peace, and were the most severe and implacable justicers against the authors or fomenters of tumults and seditions, lest they should disturb and interrupt their soft and easy course of life, the only happiness their principles allowed them to expect.

XXIV. The Essenes succeed, a sect probably distinct from either of the former. Passing by the various conjectures concerning the derivation of their name, which, when dressed up with all advantages, are still but bare conjectures, they began about the times of the Maccabees, when the violent persecutions of Antiochus forced the Jews for their own safety to retire to the woods and mountains. And though in time the storm blew over, yet many of them were too well pleased with these undisturbed solitudes to return, and therefore combined themselves into religious societies, leading a solitary and contemplative course of life, and that in very great numbers, there being usually above four thousand of them, as both Philo and Josephus tell us. Pliny takes notice of them,^r and describes them to be a solitary generation, remarkable above all others in this, that they live without women, without any embraces, without money, conversing with nothing but woods and palm-trees; that their numbers increased every day as fast as any died, persons flocking to them from all quarters to seek repose here, after they had been wearied with the inquietudes of an improsperous fortune. They paid a due reverence to the temple,^s by sending gifts and presents thither, but yet worshipped God at home, and used their own rites and ceremonies. Every seventh day they publicly met in their synagogues,^t where, the younger seating themselves at the feet of the elder, one reads some portions out of a book, which another, eminently skilled in the principles of their sect, expounds to the

^q Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xviii. c. 2.

^r Hist. Nat. l. v. c. 17.

^s Vid. Phil. lib. quod omnis probus liber. p. 876, 877.

^t Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xviii. c. 2. præcipue de Bell. Jud. l. ii. c. 12.

rest, (their *dogmata*, like the philosophy of the ancients, being obscurely and enigmatically delivered to them,) instructing them in the rules of piety and righteousness, and all the duties that concerned God, others, or themselves. They industriously tilled and cultivated the ground, and lived upon the fruits of their own labours; had all their revenues in common, there being neither rich nor poor among them: their manners were very harmless and innocent, exact observers of the rules of justice, somewhat beyond the practice of other men. As for that branch of them that lived in Egypt, whose excellent manners and institutions are so particularly described and commended by Philo, and whom Eusebius and others will needs have to have been Christians converted by St. Mark, we have taken notice of elsewhere in St. Mark's Life. We find no mention of them in the history of the gospel, probably because, living remote from cities and all places of public concourse, they never concerned themselves in the actions of Christ and his apostles. What their principles were in matters of speculation is not much material to inquire, their institutions mainly referring to practice. Out of a great regard to wisdom and virtue they neglected all care of the body, renounced all conjugal embraces, abstained very much from meats and drinks, some of them not eating or drinking for three, others for five or six days together, accounting it unbecoming men of such a philosophical temper and genius to spend any part of the day upon the necessities of the body. Their way they called *θεραπείαν*, "worship," and their rules *σοφίας δόγματα*, "doctrines of wisdom;" their contemplations were sublime and speculative, and of things beyond the ordinary notions of other sects; they traded in the names and mysteries of angels, and in all their carriages bore a great shew of modesty and humility. And, therefore, these in all likelihood were the very persons whom St. Paul primarily designed, (though not excluding others who espoused the same principles,) when he charges the Colossians^u to let no man beguile them of their reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, that being dead to the rudiments of the world, they should no longer, *δογματίζεσθαι*, be subject to these *dogmata* or ordinances, such as touch not, taste not, handle not, (the main principles of the Essenian institution,) being the

^u Col. ii. 18, 20, 21, 22, 23.

commandments and doctrines of men; which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh. Besides these three greater, there were several other lesser sects in the Jewish church, such as the Herodians, supposed to have been either part of Herod's guard, or a combination of men, who, to ingratiate themselves with the prince, maintained Herod to be the Messiah, and at their own charge celebrated his coronation days, as also the sabbath, when they used to set lighted candles crowned with violets in their windows; an opinion which St. Hierom justly laughs at as trifling and ridiculous.* Probably they were a party that had espoused Herod's interest, and endeavoured to support his new-gotten sovereignty. For Herod being a stranger, and having by the Roman power usurped the kingdom, was generally hateful and burdensome to the people, and therefore, besides the assistance of a foreign power, needed some to stand by him at home. They were peculiarly active in pressing people to pay tribute to Cæsar, Herod being obliged, (as St. Hierom observes,†) by the charter of his sovereignty, to look after the tribute due to Cæsar, and they could not do him a more acceptable service, by this means endearing him to his great patrons at Rome. In matters of opinion, they seem to have sided with the Sadducees: what St. Matthew calls "the leaven of the Sadducees,"‡ St. Mark styles the "leaven of Herod."§ Probable it is, that they had drawn Herod to be of their principles, that, as they asserted his right to the kingdom, he might favour and maintain their impious opinions: and it is likely enough, that a man of so debauched manners might be easily tempted to take shelter under principles that so directly served the purposes of a bad life. Another sect in that church were the Samaritans, the posterity of those who succeeded in the room of the ten captivated tribes, a mixture of Jews and Gentiles; they held, that nothing but the Pentateuch was the word of God, that mount Gerizim was the true place of public and solemn worship, that they were the descendants of Joseph, and heirs of the Aaronical priesthood, and that no dealing or correspondence was to be maintained with strangers, nor any unclean thing to be touched. The Karræans were a branch of the Sadducees, but rejected after-

* Comm. in Matt. xxii.

† Matt. xvi. 6.

‡ Loc. citat.

§ Mark. viii. 15.

wards their abominable and unsound opinions ; they are the true Textualists, adhering only to the writings of Moses and the prophets, and expounding the scripture by itself, peremptorily disowning the absurd glosses of the Talmud, and the idle traditions of the Rabbins ; insomuch, that they admit not so much as the Hebrew points into their bibles, accounting them part of the oral and traditionary law ; for which reason they are greatly hated by the rest of the Jews. They are in great numbers about Constantinople, and in other places, at this day. There was also the sect of the Zealots, frequently mentioned by Josephus, a generation of men insolent and ungovernable, fierce and savage, who, under a pretence of extraordinary zeal for God and the honour of his law, committed the most enormous outrages against God and man ; but of them we have given an account in the Life of St. Simon the Zealot. And yet, as if all this had not been enough to render their church miserable within itself, their sins and intestine divisions had brought in the Roman power upon them, who set magistrates and taskmasters over them, depressed their great Sanhedrim, put in and out senators at pleasure, made the temple pay tribute, and placed a garrison at hand to command it, abrogated a great part of their laws, and stripped them so naked both of civil and ecclesiastical order and authority, that they had not power left so much as to put a man to death. All evident demonstrations that Shiloh was come, and the “sceptre departed ;” that “the sacrifice and oblation was to cease, the Messiah being cut off, who came to finish transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.”

SECTION III.

OF THE EVANGELICAL DISPENSATION.

The gradual revelations concerning the Messiah. John the Baptist Christ's forerunner. His extraordinary birth. His austere education, and way of life. His preaching, what. His initiating proselytes by baptism. Baptism in use in the Jewish church. Its original, whence. His resolution and impartiality. His martyrdom. The character given him by Josephus and the Jews. The Evangelical dispensation, wherein it exceeds that of Moses. Its perspicuity and perfection. Its agreeableness to human nature. The evangelical promises better than those of the law, and in what respects.

The aids of the Spirit plentifully afforded under the gospel. The admirable confirmation of this economy. The great extent and latitude of it. Judaism not capable of being communicated to all mankind. The comprehensiveness of the gospel. The duration of the evangelical covenant. The Mosaical statutes, in what sense said to be "for ever." The typical and transient nature of that state. The great happiness of Christians under the economy of the gospel.

God having from the very infancy of the world promised the Messiah, as the great Redeemer of mankind, was accordingly pleased in all ages to make gradual discoveries and manifestations of him, the revelations concerning him in every dispensation of the church still shining with a bigger and more particular light, the nearer this "sun of righteousness" was to his rising. The first gospel and glad tidings of him commenced with the fall of Adam, God, out of infinite tenderness and commiseration, promising to send a person who should triumphantly vindicate and rescue mankind from the power and tyranny of their enemies, and that he should do this by taking the human nature upon him, and being born of "the seed of the woman." No further account is given of him till the times of Abraham, to whom it was revealed, that he should proceed out of his loins, and arise out of the Jewish nation, though both Jew and Gentile should be made happy by him. To his grandchild Jacob, God made known out of what tribe of that nation he should rise, the "tribe of Judah;" and what would be the time of his appearing, viz. the "departure of the sceptre from Judah," the abrogation of the civil and legislative power of that tribe and people, (accomplished in Herod the Idumæan, set over them by the Roman power.) And this is all we find concerning him under that economy. Under the legal dispensation, we find Moses foretelling one main errand of his coming, which was to be the great Prophet of the church,^b to whom all were to hearken, as an extraordinary person sent from God to acquaint the world with the counsels and the laws of heaven. The next news we hear from him is from David,^c who was told that he should spring out of his house and family, and who frequently speaks of his sufferings, and the particular manner of his death, by "piercing his hands and his feet;" of his powerful resurrection, that "God would not leave his soul in hell, nor suffer his holy one to see corruption;" of his triumphant ascension into heaven, and glorious

^b Deut. xviii. 15—19.

^c Psalm. xxii. 15. xvi. 10. lxviii. 18. cx. 1.

“session at God’s right hand.” From the prophet Isaiah^d we have an account of the extraordinary and miraculous manner of his birth, that he should “be born of a virgin,” and his name be Immanuel; of his incomparable furniture of gifts and graces for the execution of his office, of the entertainment he was to meet with in the world, and of the nature and design of those sufferings which he was to undergo. The place of his birth was foretold by Micah,^e which was to be Bethlehem-Ephratah, the least of the cities of Judah, but honoured above all the rest with the nativity of a prince, who was to be “ruler in Israel, whose goings forth had been from everlasting.” Lastly, the prophet Daniel^f fixes the particular period of his coming, expressly affirming, that the Messiah should appear in the world, and be cut off as a victim and expiation for the sins of the people at the expiration of seventy prophetic weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, which accordingly punctually came to pass.

II. For the date of the prophetic scriptures concerning the time of the Messiah’s coming being now run out, “in the fulness of time God sent his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law:” this being the truth of which “God spake by the mouth of all his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.” But because it was not fit that so great a person should come into the world without an eminent harbinger to introduce and usher in his arrival, God had promised that he would “send his messenger, who should prepare his way before him, even Elijah the prophet,”^g whom he would send “before the coming of that great day of the Lord, who should turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,” &c. This was particularly accomplished in John the Baptist, who “came in the power and spirit of Elias.” He was the morning-star to the Sun of righteousness, μέγας καὶ οὐκ ἄγνωστος ὁ πρόδρομος, as St. Cyril says of him,^h “the great and eminent forerunner,” a person remarkable upon several accounts. First, for the extraordinary circumstances of his nativity, his birth foretold by an angel sent on purpose to deliver this joyful message, a sign God intended him for great undertakings, this being never done but where God designed the person for some uncommon services; his parents aged, and though “both righteous

^d Isai. vii. 14. lxi. 1, 2. liii. 1, 2, 3, etc.

^e Mic. v. 2.

^f Dan. ix. 24. 26.

^g Mal. iii. 1. iv. 5, 6.

^h Comm. in Joan. i. 15.

before God," yet hitherto childless: heaven does not dispense all its bounty to the same person; children, though great and desirable blessings, are yet often denied to those for whom God has otherwise very dear regards. "Elisabeth was barren, and they were both well stricken in years." But "is any thing too hard for the Lord?" said God to Abraham in the same case: God has the key of the womb in his own keeping, it is one of the divine prerogatives, that "he makes the barren woman to keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children." A son is promised, and mighty things said of him: a promise which old Zachary had scarce faith enough to digest, and therefore had the assurance of it sealed to him by a miraculous dumbness imposed upon him till it was made good, the same miracle at once confirming his faith and punishing his infidelity. Accordingly, his mother conceived with child, and as if he would do part of his errand before he was born, he "leaped in her womb" at her salutation of the Virgin Mary, then newly conceived with child of our blessed Saviour; a piece of homage paid by one, to one, yet unborn.

III. These presages were not vain and fallible, but produced a person no less memorable for the admirable strictness and austerity of his life. For having escaped Herod's butcherly and merciless executioners, (the Divine Providence being a shelter and a cover to him,) and been educated among the rudenesses and solitudes of the wilderness, his manners and way of life were very agreeable to his education. His garments borrowed from no other wardrobe than the backs of his neighbour-creatures, the skins of beasts, camel's hair, and a leathern girdle; and herein he literally made good the character of Elias,¹ who is described as "an hairy man, girt with a leathern girdle about his loins." His diet suitable to his garb, "his meat was locusts and wild honey:" locusts, accounted by all nations among the meanest and vilest sorts of food; wild honey, such as the natural artifice and labour of the bees had stored up in caverns and hollow trees, without any elaborate curiosity to prepare and dress it up. Indeed, his abstinence was so great, and his food so unlike other men's, that the evangelist says of him, that "he came neither eating nor drinking," as if he had eaten nothing, or at least what was worth nothing. But "meat commends us

¹ 2 Kings i. 8.

not to God ;” it is the devout mind and the honest life that makes us valuable in the eye of heaven. The place of his abode was not in king’s houses, in stately and delicate palaces, but where he was born and bred, “the wilderness of Judea, he was in the deserts until the time of his shewing unto Israel.”^k Divine grace is not confined to particular places, it is not the holy city, or the temple at mount Sion makes us nearer unto heaven ; God can, when he please, consecrate a desert into a church, make us gather grapes among thorns, and religion become fruitful in a barren wilderness.

IV. Prepared by so singular an education, and furnished with an immediate commission from God, he entered upon the actual administration of his office : “ In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” He was *Χριστοῦ τῆς πρώτης φανερώσεως κήρυξ*, as Justin Martyr calls him,¹ “the herald to proclaim the first approach of the holy Jesus ;” his whole ministry tending to prepare the way to his entertainment, accomplishing herein what was of old foretold concerning him : “ For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” He told the Jews, that the Messiah whom they had so long expected was now at hand, and his kingdom ready to appear ; that the Son of God was come down from heaven, a person as far beyond him in dignity as in time and existence, to whom he was not worthy to minister in the meanest offices ; that he came to introduce a new and better state of things ; to enlighten the world with the clearest revelations of the divine will, and to acquaint them with counsels brought from the bosom of the Father ; to put a period to all the types and umbrages of the Mosaic dispensation, and bring in the truth and substance of all those shadows, and to open a fountain of grace and fulness to mankind ; to remove that state of guilt into which human nature was so deeply sunk, and, as the Lamb of God, by the expiatory sacrifice of himself, to take away the sin of the world, not like the continual burnt-offering, the lamb offered morning and evening, only for the sins of the house of Israel, but for Jew and Gentile, Barbarian and Scythian, bond and free. He

^k Luke i. 80.

¹ Dial. cum Tryph. s. 49.

told them, that God had a long time borne with the sins of men, and would now bring things to a quicker issue, and that therefore they should do well to break off their sins by repentance, and by a serious amendment and reformation of life dispose themselves for the glad tidings of the gospel; that they should no longer bear up themselves upon their external privileges, the fatherhood of Abraham, and their being God's select and peculiar people; that God would raise up to himself another generation, a posterity of Abraham from among the Gentiles, who should walk in his steps, in the way of his unshaken faith and sincere obedience; and that if all this did not move them to bring "forth fruits meet for repentance," the "axe was laid to the root of the tree," to extirpate their church, and to hew them down as fuel for the unquenchable fire. His free and resolute preaching, together with the great severity of his life, procured him a vast auditory, and numerous proselytes, for "there went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and the region round about Jordan;" persons of all ranks and orders, of all sects and opinions, Pharisees and Sadducees, soldiers and publicans, whose vices he impartially censured and condemned, and pressed upon them the duties of their particular places and relations. Those whom he gained over to be proselytes to his doctrine he entered into this new institution of life by baptism, (and hence he derived his title of the Baptist,) a solemn and usual way of initiating proselytes, no less than circumcision, and of great antiquity in the Jewish church. "In all times, (says Maimonides,^m) if any Gentile would enter into covenant, remain under the wings of the Shechinah, or Divine Majesty, and take upon him the yoke of the law, he is bound to have מילה ושילה והדצאת קרבן, 'circumcision, baptism, and a peace-offering:' and if a woman, baptism and an oblation, because it is said, As ye are, so shall the stranger be; as ye yourselves entered into covenant by circumcision, baptism, and a peace-offering, so ought the proselyte also, in all ages, to enter in." Though this last, he confesses, is to be omitted during their present state of desolation, and to be made when their temple shall be rebuilt. This rite they generally make contemporary with the giving of the law. So Maimonides:ⁿ "By three things

^m Maim. Issur. Biah. c. 13. vid. Jac. Alting. Dissert. Philol. vii. de Proselyt. sect. 25. num. 15, 16.

ⁿ Ibid. s. 24.

(says he) the Israelites entered into covenant," (he means the national covenant at mount Sinai,) "by circumcision, baptism, and an oblation; baptism being used some little time before the law;" which he proves from that place,^o "Sanctify the people to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes." This the Rabbins unanimously expound concerning baptism, and expressly affirm, that "wherever we read of the washing of clothes, there an obligation to baptism is intended." Thus they entered into the first covenant; upon the frequent violations whereof, God having promised to make a new and solemn covenant with them in the times of the Messiah, they expected a second baptism, as that which should be the rite of their initiation into it. And this, probably, is the reason why the apostle, writing to the Hebrews,^p speaks of the "doctrine of baptisms" (in the plural number) as one of the primary and elementary principles of the faith, wherein the catechumens were to be instructed; meaning, that besides the baptism whereby they had been initiated into the Mosaic covenant, there was another by which they were to enter into this new economy that was come upon the world. Hence the Sanhedrim, (to whom the cognizance of such cases did peculiarly appertain,) when told of John's baptism, never expressed any wonder at it, as a new upstart ceremony, it being a thing daily practised in their church; nor found fault with the thing itself, which they supposed would be a federal rite under the dispensation of the Messiah; but only quarrelled with him for taking upon him to administer it, when yet he denied himself to be one of the prime ministers of this new state. "They said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?"^q Either of which had he owned himself, they had not questioned his right to enter proselytes by this way of baptism. It is called the "baptism of repentance," this being the main qualification that he required of those who took it upon them, as the fittest means to dispose them to receive the doctrine and discipline of the Messiah; and to entitle them to that pardon of sin which the gospel brought along with it; whence he is said to "baptize in the wilderness," and to "preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins."^r And the success was answerable: infinite multitudes

^o Exod. xix. 10. Vid. R. Bechai. fol. 87. col. 2. ibid.

^p Heb. vi. 2.

^q John i. 25.

^r Mark i. 4.

flocking to it, and “were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.” Nor is it the least part of his happiness, that he had the honour to baptize his Saviour, which, though modestly declined, our Lord put upon him, and was accompanied with the most signal and miraculous attestations which heaven could bestow upon it.

V. After his preparatory preaching in the wilderness, he was called to court by Herod; at least he was his frequent auditor, was much delighted with his plain and impartial sermons, and had a mighty reverence for him; the gravity of his person, the strictness of his manners, the freedom of his preaching, commanding an awe and veneration from his conscience, and making him willing in many things to reform: but the bluntness of the holy man came nearer, and touched the king in the tenderest part, smartly reproving his adultery and incestuous embraces; for that prince kept Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife. And now all corrupt interests were awakened to conspire his ruin. Extravagant lusts love not to be controlled and checked: Herodias resents the affront, cannot brook disturbance in the pleasures of her bed, or the open challenging of her honour, and therefore, by all the arts of feminine subtlety, meditates revenge. The issue was, the Baptist is cast into prison, as the *prælude* to a sadder fate. For among other pleasures and scenes of mirth performed upon the king’s birth-day, Herod being infinitely pleased with the dancing of a young lady, daughter of this Herodias, promised to give her her request, and solemnly ratified his promise with an oath. She, prompted by her mother, asks the head of John the Baptist, which the king, partly out of a pretended reverence to his oath, partly out of a desire not to be interrupted in his unlawful pleasures, presently granted, and it was as quickly accomplished. Thus died the holy man, a man strict in his conversation beyond the ordinary measures of an anchorite, bold and resolute, faithful and impartial in his office, endued with the “power and spirit of Elias, a burning and a shining light;” under whose light the Jews rejoiced to sit, exceedingly taken with his temper and principles. He was the happy messenger of the evangelical tidings, and in that respect “more than a prophet, a greater not arising among them that were born of women.” In short, he was a man loved of his friends, revered and honoured by his enemies. Josephus gives

this character of him :^{*} that “he was a good man, and pressed the Jews to the study of virtue, to the practice of piety towards God, and justice and righteousness towards men, and to join themselves to his baptism ; which he told them would then become effectual, and acceptable to God, when they did not only cleanse the body, but purify the mind by goodness and virtue.” And though he gives somewhat a different account of Herod’s condemning him to die, from what is assigned in the sacred history ; yet he confesses, that the Jews universally looked upon the putting him to death as the cause of the miscarriage of Herod’s army, and an evident effect of the divine vengeance and displeasure. The Jews in their writings[†] make honourable mention of his being put to death by Herod, because reproving him for the company of his brother Philip’s wife ; styling him rabbi Johanan the high-priest, and reckoning him “one, *אחד*, *מחכמי*, of the wise men of Israel.” Where he is called high-priest, probably with respect to his being the son of Zachariah, head or chief of one of the twenty-four families or courses of the priests, who are many times called chief or high-priests in scripture.

VI. The evangelical state being thus proclaimed and ushered in by the preaching and ministry of the Baptist, our Lord himself appeared next more fully to publish and confirm it ; concerning whose birth, life, death, and resurrection, the doctrine he delivered, the persons he deputed to preach and convey it to the world, and its success by the ministry of the apostles, large and particular accounts are given in the following work. That which may be proper and material to observe in this place is, what the scripture so frequently takes notice of, the excellency of this above the preceding dispensations ; especially that brought in by Moses, so much magnified in the Old Testament, and so passionately admired and adhered to by the Jews at this day. “Jesus is the mediator,” *κρείττονος διαθήκης*, as the apostle calls it,[‡] “of a better covenant.” And better it is in several regards ; besides the infinite difference between the persons who were employed to introduce and settle them, Moses and our

^{*} Antiq. Jud. l. xviii. c. 7.

[†] Zemach David, par. i. ad Ann. 770. Millen. 4. et Chron. Templi secund. fol. 54. col. 4.

[‡] Heb. viii. 6.

Lord. The preeminence eminently appears in many instances, whereof we shall remark the most considerable. And first, the Mosaic dispensation was almost wholly made up of types and shadows, the Evangelical has brought in the truth and substance: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."* Their ordinances were but "shadows of good things to come," sensible representations of what was to follow after, "the body is Christ," the perfection and accomplishment of their whole ritual ministration. Their ceremonies were "figures of those things that are true:" the land of Canaan typified heaven, Moses and Joshua were types of the blessed Jesus, and the Israelites after the flesh of the true Israel which is after the Spirit, and all their expiatory sacrifices did but represent that great sacrifice whereby Christ offered up himself, and by his own blood purged away the sins of mankind; indeed the most minute and inconsiderable circumstances of the legal economy were intended as little lights, that might gradually usher in the state of the gospel. A curious artist that designs a famous and excellent piece, is not wont to complete and finish it all at once, but first with his pencil draws some rude lines and rough draughts before he puts his last hand to it. By such a method the wise God seems to have delivered the first draughts and images of those things by Moses to the church, the substance and perfection whereof he designed should be brought in by Christ. And how admirably did God herein condescend to the temper and humour of that people; for being of a more rough and childish disposition, apt to be taken with gaudy and and sensible objects, by the external and pompous institutions of the ceremonial dispensation, he prepared them for better things, as children are brought on by things accommodate to their weak capacities. The church was then an heir under age, and was to be trained up in such a way, as agreed best with its infant-temper, till it came to be of a more ripe manly age, able to digest evangelical mysteries; and then the cover and the veil was taken off, and things made to appear in their own form and shape.

VII. Hence in the next place appears our happiness above them, that we are redeemed from those many severe and burdensome impositions wherewith they were clogged, and are now

* John i. 17.

obliged only to a more easy and reasonable service. That the law was a very grievous and servile dispensation, is evident to any that considers, how much it consisted of carnal ordinances, costly duties, chargeable sacrifices, and innumerable little rites and ceremonies. Under that state they were bound to undergo (yea, even new-born infants) the bloody and painful ceremony of circumcision, to abstain from many sorts of food, useful and pleasant to man's life, to keep multitudes of solemn and stated times, new moons, and ceremonial sabbaths, to take long and tedious journeys to Jerusalem to offer their sacrifices at the temple, to observe daily washings and purifications, to use infinite care and caution in every place; for if by chance they did but touch an unclean thing, besides their present confinement, it put them to the expenses of a sacrifice, with hundreds more troublesome and costly observances required of them. A cruel bondage, "heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne;" under the weight whereof good men did then groan, and earnestly breathe after "the time of reformation;" the very apostles complained that it was "a yoke upon their necks, which neither their fathers nor they were able to bear."^y But this yoke is taken off from our shoulders, and the way open into the liberties of the children of God. The law bore a heavy hand over them, as children in their minority: we are got from under the rod and lash of its tutorage and pædagogy, and are no more subject to the severity of its commands, to the exact punctilios and numerousness of its impositions. Our Lord has removed that low and troublesome religion, and has brought in a more manly and rational way of worship, more suitable to the perfections of God, and more accommodate to the reason and understandings of men: a religion incomparably the wisest and the best that ever took place in the world. God did not settle the religion of the Jews, and their way of worship, because good and excellent in itself, but for its suitableness to the temper of that people. Happy we, whom the gospel has freed from those intolerable observances to which they were obliged, and has taught us to serve God in a better way, more easy and acceptable, more human and natural, and in which we are helped forwards by greater aids of divine assistance than were afforded under that dispensation. All which conspire to render our way smooth and plain: "Take

^y Acts xv. 10.

my yoke upon you, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

VIII. Thirdly, the dispensation of the gospel is founded upon more noble and excellent promises: "a better covenant, established upon better promises."^a And better promises they are, both for the nature and clearness of their revelation. They are of a more sublime and excellent nature, as being promises of spiritual and eternal things, such as immediately concern the perfection and happiness of mankind, grace, peace, pardon, and eternal life. The law strictly considered, as a particular covenant with the Jews at mount Sinai, had no other promises but of temporal blessings, plenty and prosperity, and the happiness of this life. This was all that appeared above-ground, and that was expressly held forth in that transaction, whatever might otherwise, by due inferences and proportions of reason, be deduced from it. Now this was a great defect in that dispensation, it being by this means, considering the nature and disposition of that people, and the use they would make of it, apt to entangle and debase the minds of men, and to arrest their thoughts and desires in the pursuit of more sublime and better things. I do not say but that under the Old Testament there were promises of spiritual things, and of eternal happiness, as appears from David's Psalms, and some passages in the books of the prophets: but then these, though they were *under* the law, yet they were not *of* the law, that is, did not properly belong to it as a legal covenant; God in every age of the Jewish church raising up some extraordinary persons, who preached notions to the people above the common standard of that dispensation, and who spoke things more plainly, by how much nearer they approached the times of the Messiah. But under the Christian economy the promises are evidently more pure and spiritual; not a temporal Canaan, external prosperity, or pardon of ceremonial uncleanness, but remission of sins, reconciliation with God, and everlasting life, are proposed and offered to us. Not but that in some measure temporal blessings are promised to us as well as them, only with this difference, to them earthly blessings were pledges of spiritual, to us spiritual blessings are insurances of temporal, so far as the divine wisdom sees fit for us. Nor are they better in themselves, than they are clearly discovered and revealed to us.

^a Heb. viii. 6.

Whatever spiritual blessings were proposed under the former state were obscure and dark, and very few of the people understood them: but to us "the veil is taken off, and we behold the glory of the Lord with open face," especially the things that relate to another world; for "this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life."^a Hence our Lord is said to "have brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:"^b which he may be justly said to have done, inasmuch as he has given the greatest certainty, and the clearest account of that state. He hath given us the greatest assurance and certainty of the thing, that there is such a state. The happiness of the other world was a notion not so firmly agreed upon either amongst the Jews or Gentiles. Among the Jews it was peremptorily denied by the Sadducees, a considerable sect in that church, which we can hardly suppose they would have done, had it been clearly propounded in the law of Moses. And among the heathens, the most sober and considering persons did at some times at least doubt of it: witness that confession Socrates himself, the wisest and best man that ever was in the heathen world, who, when he came to plead his cause before his judges, and had bravely discoursed of the happy state of good men in the other life, plainly confessed,^c that he could be content *πολλὰκις τεθνάναι*, "to die a thousand times over," were he but assured that those things were true; and, being condemned, concludes his apology with this farewell: "And now, gentlemen, I am going off the stage, it is your lot to live, and mine to die, but whether of us two shall fare better, is *ἄδηλον παντὶ πλὴν ἡ τῷ Θεῷ*, "unknown to any but to God alone."^d But our blessed Saviour has put the case past all peradventure, having plainly published this doctrine to the world, and sealed the truth of it, and that by raising others from the dead, and especially by his own resurrection and ascension, which were the highest pledge and assurance of a future immortality. But besides the security, he hath given the clearest account of the nature of it. It is very probable that the Jews generally had of old, as it is certain they have at this day, the most gross and carnal apprehensions concerning the state of another life. But to us the gospel has perspicuously revealed the invisible things of the other world:

^a 1 John ii. 25.

^b 2 Tim. i. 10.

^c Apolog. Socrat. ap. Platon. sect. 22.

^d Ib. sect. 23. ad fin. Apol.

told us what that heaven is, which is promised to good men, a state of spiritual joys, of chaste and rational delights, a conformity of ours to the divine nature, a being made like to God, and an endless and uninterrupted communion with him.

IX. But because in our lapsed and degenerate state we are very unable without some foreign assistance to attain the promised rewards, hence arises in the next place another great privilege of the evangelical economy, that it is blessed with larger and more abundant communications of the Divine Spirit than was afforded under the Jewish state. Under the one it was given by drops, under the other it was poured forth. The law laid heavy and hard commands, but gave little strength to do them; it did not assist human nature with those powerful aids that are necessary for us in our present state; it could "do nothing, in that it was weak through the flesh;"^e and "by reason of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof, it could make nothing perfect:"^f it was this made it an "heavy yoke," when the commands of it were uncouth and troublesome, and the assistances so small and inconsiderable. Whereas now the gospel does not only prescribe such laws as are happily accommodate to the true temper of human nature, and adapted to the reason of mankind, such as every wise and prudent man must have pitched upon, but it affords the influences of the Spirit of God, by whose assistance our vitiated faculties are repaired, and we enabled under so much weakness, and in the midst of so many temptations, to hold on in the paths of piety and virtue. Hence it is that the plentiful effusions of the Spirit were reserved as the great blessing of the evangelical state, that God would then "pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground;"^g that he "would pour out his Spirit upon their seed, and his blessing upon their offspring," whereby they should "spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses;" that he would "give them a new heart, and put his Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in his statutes, and keep his judgments to do them:"^h And this is the meaning of those branches of the covenant so oft repeated, "I will put my law into their minds, and write it in their hearts;" that is, by the help of my grace and spirit I will enable them to

^e Rom. viii. 3.

^g Isai. xlv. 3, 4.

^f Heb. vii. 18.

^h Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.

live according to my laws, as readily and willingly as if they were written in their hearts. For this reason the law is compared to a "dead letter," the gospel to the "Spirit that giveth life," thence styled the "ministration of the Spirit,"ⁱ and as such said to "exceed in glory," and that to such a degree, that what glory the legal dispensation had in this case is eclipsed into nothing. "For even that which was made glorious, had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth, for if that which was done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."^k Hence the Spirit is said to be Christ's peculiar mission: "I will pray the Father, and he will send you another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth;"^l which was done immediately after his ascension, when he "ascended up on high, and gave gifts to men,"^m even "the Holy Ghost, which he shed on them abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour:"ⁿ for "the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified."^o Not but that he was given before, even under the old economy, but not in those large and diffusive measures wherein it was afterwards communicated to the world.

X. Fifthly, the dispensation of the gospel had a better establishment and confirmation than that of the law; for though the law was introduced with great scenes of pomp and majesty, yet was the gospel ushered in by more kindly and rational methods, ratified by more and greater miracles, whereby our Lord unquestionably evinced his divine commission, and shewed that he came from God; doing more miracles in three years than were done through all the periods of the Jewish church, and many of them such as were peculiar to him alone. He often raised the dead, which Moses never did; commanded the winds and waves of the sea; expelled devils out of lunatics and possessed persons, who fled as soon as ever he commanded them to be gone; cured many inveterate and chronical distempers with the speaking of a word, and some without a word spoken, virtue silently going out from him. He searched men's hearts, and revealed the most secret transactions of their minds; had this miraculous power always residing in him, and could exert it when and upon what occasions he pleased, and impart it to

ⁱ 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7.

^l John xiv. 16, 17.

ⁿ Tit. iii. 5, 6.

^k 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11.

^m Ephea. iv. 8.

^o John vii. 39.

others, communicating it to his apostles and followers, and to the primitive Christians of the three first ages of the church; he never exerted it in methods of dread and terror, but in doing such miracles as were highly useful and beneficial to the world: and as if all this had not been enough, he laid down his own life after all to give testimony to it. Covenants were ever wont to be ratified with blood, and the death of sacrifices: but when our Lord came to introduce the covenant of the gospel, he did not consecrate it with the blood of bulls and goats, but with his own most precious blood, as of a lamb without spot and blemish. And could he give a greater testimony to the truth of his doctrine, and those great things he had promised to the world, than to seal it with his blood? Had not these things been so, it were infinitely unreasonable to suppose that a person of so much wisdom and goodness as our Saviour was, should have made the world believe so; and much less would he have chosen to die for it, and that the most acute and ignominious death. But he died and rose again for us, and appeared after his resurrection. His enemies had taken him away by a most bitter and cruel death; had guarded and secured his sepulchre with all the care, power, and diligence which they could invent; and yet he rose again the third day in triumph, visibly conversed with his disciples for forty days together, and then went to heaven. By which he gave the most solemn and undeniable assurance to the world, that he was the Son of God, (for "he was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead,"^p) and the Saviour of mankind, and that those doctrines which he had taught were most true, and did really contain the terms of that solemn transaction which God by him had offered to men, in order to their eternal happiness in another world.

XI. The last instance I shall note of the excellency of this above the Mosaical dispensation, is the universal extent and latitude of it, and that both in respect of place and time. First, it is more universally extensive as to place: not confined, as the former was, to a small part of mankind, but common unto all. Heretofore "in Judah only was God known, and his name was great in Israel;"^q "he shewed his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel; but he did not deal so with any other nation, neither had the heathen knowledge of his

^p Rom. i. 4.

^q Psalm lxxvi. 1.

laws.”^r In those times “salvation was only of the Jews;” a few acres of land, like Gideon’s fleece, were watered with the dew of heaven, while all the rest of the world, for many ages, lay dry and barren round about it, God “suffering all nations in times past to walk in their own ways,”^s the ways of their own superstition and idolatry, “being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world;”^t that is, they were without those promises, discoveries, and declarations which God made to Abraham and his seed, and are therefore peculiarly described under this character, “the Gentiles which knew not God.”^u Indeed, the religion of the Jews was in itself incapable to be extended over the world, many considerable parts of it, as sacrifices, first-fruits, oblations, &c. (called by the Jews themselves מצוות הלוויית בארץ, “statutes belonging to that land,”) being to be performed at Jerusalem and the temple, which could not be done by those nations that lay a considerable distance from the land of promise. They had, it is true, now and then, some few proselytes of the Gentiles, who came over and embodied themselves into their way of worship; but then they either resided among the Jews, or by reason of their vicinity to Judea were capable to make their personal appearance, and to comply with the public institutions of the divine law. Other proselytes they had, called proselytes of the gate, who lived dispersed in all countries, whom the Jews call חסידים אומות, “the pious of the nations,” men of devout minds and religious lives; but these were obliged to no more than the observation of the “seven precepts of the sons of Noah;” that is, in effect, to the precepts of the natural law. But now the gospel has a much wider sphere to move in, as vast and large as the whole world itself; it is communicable to all countries, and may be exercised in any part or corner of the earth. Our Lord gave commission to his apostles to “go into all nations, and to preach the gospel to every creature;”^w and so they did, “their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world:”^x by which means, “the grace of God that brings salvation appeared unto all men,”^y and “the gospel was preached unto every creature under heaven.”^z So that now “there is neither Jew nor Greek,

^r Psalm cxlvii. 19, 20.^s Acts xiv. 16.^t Ephes. ii. 12.^u 1 Thessa. iv. 5.^w Mark xvi. 15.^x Rom. x. 18.^y Tit. ii. 11.^z Colos. i. 23.

neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, but we are all one in Christ Jesus ;”^a and “in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”^b The prophet had long since foretold it of the times of Christ, that “the house of God, (that is, his church,) should be called an house of prayer for all people ;”^c the doors should be open, and none excluded that would enter in. And the divine providence was singularly remarkable in this affair, that after our Lord’s ascension, when the apostles were going upon their commission, and were first solemnly to proclaim it at Jerusalem, there were dwelling there, at that time, Parthians, Medes, Elamites, &c. persons out of every nation under heaven, that they might be as the first-fruits of those several countries, which were to be gathered in by the preaching of the gospel ; which was accordingly done with great success, the Christian religion in a few years spreading its triumphant banners over the greatest part of the then known world.

XII. And as the true religion was in those days pent up within one particular country, so the more public and ordinary worship of God was confined only to one particular place of it, viz. Jerusalem, hence called the Holy City. Here was the temple, here the priests that ministered at the altar, here all the more public solemnities of divine adoration ; “thither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.”^d Now this was not the least part of the bondage of that dispensation, to be obliged thrice every year to take such long and tedious journeys, many of the Jews living some hundreds of miles distance from Jerusalem, and so strictly were they limited to this place, that to build an altar and offer sacrifices in any other place, (unless in a case or two wherein God did extraordinarily dispense,) although it were to the true God, was, though not false, yet unwarrantable worship ; for which reason the Jews at this day abstain from sacrifices, because banished from Jerusalem and the temple, the only legal place of offering. But behold the liberty of the gospel in this case ; we are not tied to present our devotions at Jerusalem, a pious and sincere mind is the best sacrifice that we can offer up to God, and this may be done in any part of the world, no less acceptably than they of old sacrificed in the temple : “the hour

^a Galat. iii. 28.^b Acts x. 35.^c Isai. lvi. 7.^d Psalm cxxii. 4.

cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, (mount Gerizim,) nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth," as our Lord told the woman of Samaria: "in spirit and in truth;" in spirit, in opposition to that carnal and idolatrous worship that was in use among the Samaritans, who worshipped God under the representation of a dove; in truth, in opposition to the typical and figurative worship of the Jews, which was but a shadow of the true worship of the gospel. The great sacrifice required in the Christian religion, is not the fat of beasts,^f or the first-fruits of the ground, but an honest heart, and a pious life, and a grateful acknowledgment of our dependence upon God in the public solemnities of his praise and worship. For the law and the gospel did not differ in this, that the one commanded public worship, the other not; but that under the one, public worship was fixed to one only place; under the other, it is free to any where the providence of God has placed us: it being part of the duty bound upon us by natural and unalterable obligations, that we should publicly meet together for the solemn celebration of the divine honour and service.

XIII. Nor is the economy of the gospel less extensive in time than place; the Old Testament was only a temporary dispensation, that of the gospel is to last to the end of the world; the law was to continue only for a little time, the gospel is an everlasting covenant; the one to be quickly antiquated and abolished, the other never to be done away by any other to succeed it. The Jews, indeed, stickle hard for the perpetual and immutable obligation of the law of Moses, and frequently urge us with those places,^g where the covenant of circumcision is called an "everlasting covenant," and God said to choose the temple at Jerusalem to "place his name there for ever," to give the land of Canaan to Abraham and his seed for "an everlasting possession:" thus the law of the passover is called an "ordinance for ever," the command of the first-fruits a "statute for ever," and the like in other places, which seem to intimate a perpetual and unalterable dispensation. But the answer is short and plain; that this phrase לעולם, "for ever," (though when it is applied to God it always denotes eternity,) yet when it is attributed to other things, it

^e John iv. 21—23.

^f Vid. Philo de Spec. Legg. p. 775.

^g Gen. xvii. 7. 1 Kings ix. 3. Gen. xvii. 8. Exod. xii. 14. Levit. xxiii. 14.

implies no more than a periodical duration, limited according to the will of the lawgiver, or the nature of the thing : thus the Hebrew servant was to serve his master “for ever ;”^b that is, but for seven years, till the next year of jubilee : “he shall walk before mine anointed for ever,”ⁱ says God concerning Samuel ; that is, be a priest all his days. Thus when the ritual services of the Mosaic law are called statutes for ever, the meaning is, that they should continue a long time obligatory, until the time of the Messiah, in whose days “the sacrifice and oblation was to cease,” and those carnal ceremonies to give way to the more spiritual services of the gospel. Indeed, the very typical nature of that dispensation evidently argued it to be but for a time, the shadow being to cease that the substance might take place ; and though many of them continued some considerable time after Christ’s death, yet they lost their positive and obligatory power, and were used only as things indifferent in compliance with the inveterate prejudices of new converts, lately brought over from Judaism, and who could not quickly lay aside that great veneration which they had for the rites of the Mosaic institution : though even in this respect it was not long before all Jewish ceremonies were thrown off, and Moses quite turned out of doors. Whereas the evangelical state is to run parallel with the age and duration of the world, it is the “everlasting covenant,”^k the “everlasting gospel,”^l the last dispensation that God will make to the world : “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son ;”^m in which respect, the gospel, in opposition to the law, is styled “a kingdom that cannot be moved.”ⁿ The apostle, in the foregoing verses, speaking concerning the Mosaic state, “whose voice (says he) then shook the earth, but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also the heaven, (a phrase peculiar to the scripture to note the introducing a new scene and state of things ;) and this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain ;” that is, that the state of the gospel may endure for ever. Hence Christ is said to have an “unchangeable priesthood, to be a priest for ever,” to be “consecrated for

^b Exod. xxi. 6.ⁱ 1 Sam. ii. 36.^k Heb. xiii. 20.^l Rev. xiv. 6.^m Heb. i. 1, 2.ⁿ Heb. xii. 28.

evermore." From all which it appears, how incomparably happy we Christians are under the gospel, above what the Jews were in the time of the law ; God having placed us under the best of dispensations, freed us from those many nice and troublesome observances to which they were tied ; put us under the clearest discoveries and revelations, and given us the most noble, rational, and masculine religion, a religion the most perfective of our natures, and the most conducive to our happiness ; while their covenant at best was faulty, and after all could not " make him that did the service perfect in things pertaining to the conscience." " Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see : for I tell you, that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them ; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."*

* Luke x. 23, 24.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

Christ's faithfulness in appointing officers in his church. The dignity of the apostles above the rest. The importance of the word *Ἀπόστολος*. The nature of the apostolic office considered. Respect had in founding it to the custom among the Jews. Their *apostoli*, who. The number of the apostles limited. Why twelve, the several conjectures of the ancients. Their immediate election. Their work, wherein it consisted. The universality of their commission. Apostolical churches, what. How soon the apostles propagated Christianity through the world. An argument for the divinity of the Christian religion inferred thence. The power conveyed to the apostles, equally given to all. Peter's superiority over the rest disproved both from scripture and antiquity. The apostles, how qualified for their mission. Immediately taught the doctrine they delivered. Infallibly secured from error in delivering it. Their constant and familiar converse with their master. Furnished with the power of working miracles. The great evidence of it to prove a divine doctrine. Miraculous powers conferred upon the apostles particularly considered. Prophecy, what, and when it ceased. The gift of discerning spirits. The gift of tongues. The gift of interpretation. The unreasonable practice of the church of Rome in keeping the scriptures and divine worship in an unknown tongue. The gift of healing greatly advantageous to Christianity: how long it lasted. Power of immediately inflicting corporal punishments; and the great benefit of it in those times. The apostles enabled to confer miraculous powers upon others. The duration of the apostolical office. What in it extraordinary, what ordinary. Bishops, in what sense styled Apostles.

JESUS CHRIST, the great "apostle and high-priest of our profession," being appointed by God to be the supreme ruler and governor of his church, was, like Moses, "faithful in all his house:" but with this honourable advantage, that Moses was faithful as a servant, Christ as a Son over his own house, which he erected, established, and governed, with all possible care and diligence. Nor could he give a greater instance either of his fidelity towards God, or his love and kindness to the souls of men, than that after he had purchased a family to himself, and

could now no longer upon earth manage its interests in his own person, he would not return back to heaven till he had constituted several orders and officers in his church, who might superintend and conduct its affairs, and, according to the various circumstances of its state, administer to the needs and exigencies of his family. Accordingly, therefore, "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."^a The first and prime class of officers is that of apostles: "God hath set some in the church, first, apostles, secondarily prophets," &c. First, apostles, as far in office as honour before the rest, their election more immediate, their commission more large and comprehensive, the powers and privileges wherewith they were furnished greater and more honourable: prophecy, the gift of miracles and expelling demons: the order of pastors and teachers were all spiritual powers and ensigns of great authority, *ἀλλὰ τούτων ἀπάντων μεζῶν ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ ἡ ἀποστολική*, says Chrysostom,^b "but the apostolic eminency is far greater than all these," which therefore he calls a spiritual consulship; an apostle having as great preeminence above all other officers in the church, as the consul had above all other magistrates in Rome. These apostles were a few select persons whom our Lord chose out of the rest, to devolve part of the government upon their shoulders, and to depute for the first planting and settling Christianity in the world: "He chose twelve, whom he named apostles:"^c of whose lives and acts being to give an historical account in the following work, it may not possibly be useless to premise some general remarks concerning them, not respecting this or that particular person, but of a general relation to the whole; wherein we shall especially take notice of the importance of the word, the nature of the employment, the fitness and qualification of the persons, and the duration and continuance of the office.

II. The word *ἀπόστολος*, or "sent," is among ancient writers applied either to things, actions, or persons. To things: thus

^a Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13.

^b Serm. de util. lection. S. Script. vol. viii. p. 114. edit. Savil.

^c Luke vi. 13.

those dimissory letters that were granted to such who appealed from an inferior to a superior judicature, were in the language of the Roman laws usually called *apostoli*:^d thus a packet-boat was styled, *ἀπόστολον πλοῖον*, because sent up and down for advice and despatch of business: thus, though in somewhat a different sense, the lesson taken out of the epistles is in the ancient Greek liturgies called *ἀπόστολος*,^e because usually taken out of the apostles' writings. Sometimes it is applied to actions, and so imports no more than mission, or the very act of sending: thus the setting out a fleet, or a naval expedition, was wont to be called *ἀπόστολος*, so Suidas tells us,^f that as the persons designed for the cure and management of the fleet were called *ἀποστολεῖς*, so the very sending forth of the ships themselves, *αἱ τῶν νεῶν ἐκπομπαί*, were styled *ἀπόστολοι*. Lastly, what principally falls under our present consideration, it is applied to persons, and so imports no more than a messenger, a person sent upon some special errand, for the discharge of some peculiar affair in his name that sent him. Thus Epaphroditus is called the apostle or messenger of the Philippians,^g when sent by them to St. Paul at Rome: thus Titus and his companions are styled *ἀπόστολοι*, "the messengers of the churches."^h So our Lord; "he that is sent, *ἀπόστολος*, an apostle or messenger, is not greater than him that sent him."ⁱ This, then, being the common notion of the word, our Lord fixes it to a particular use, applying it to those select persons whom he had made choice of to act by that peculiar authority and commission which he had derived upon them. "Twelve, whom he also named apostles;" that is, commissioners, those who were to be ambassadors for Christ, to be sent up and down in the world in his name, to plant the faith, to govern and superintend the church at present, and, by their wise and prudent settlement of affairs, to provide for the future exigencies of the church.

III. The next thing then to be considered, is the nature of their office; and under this inquiry we shall make these following remarks. First, it is not to be doubted but that our Lord, in

^d L. Unic. ff. lib. xlix. Tit. vi. vid. lib. cvi. Tit. xvi. lib. l. et Paul. JC. Sentent. lib. ix. Tit. xxxix.

^e Vid. Chrysost. Liturg. in Ritual. Græc.

^f Suidas in voc. *ἀποστολαί*, ex Demosth. vid. Harpocr. Lex. in Dec. Rhet.

^g Phil. ii. 25.

^h 2 Cor. viii. 23.

ⁱ John xiii. 16.

founding this office, had some respect to the state of things in the Jewish church ; I mean, not only in general, that there should be superior and subordinate officers, as there were superior and inferior orders under the Mosaic dispensation, but that herein he had an eye to some usage and custom common among them. Now among the Jews, as all messengers were called *שלוחים*, or "apostles,"^k so were they wont to despatch some with peculiar letters of authority and commission, whereby they acted as proxies and deputies of those that sent them, thence their proverb, *שלוחו של אדם כמותו*, "every man's apostle is as himself;" that is, whatever he does is looked upon to be as firm and valid as if the person himself had done it. Thus when Saul was sent by the Sanhedrim to Damascus to apprehend the Jewish converts, he was furnished with letters from the high-priest, enabling him to act as his commissary in that matter. Indeed, Epiphanius tells us of a sort of persons called apostles,^l who were assessors and counsellors to the Jewish patriarch, constantly attending upon him to advise him in matters pertaining to the law, and sent by him (as he intimates^m) sometimes to inspect and reform the manners of the priests and Jewish clergy, and the irregularities of country-synagogues, with commission to gather the tenths and first-fruits due in all the provinces under his jurisdiction. Such apostles we find mentioned both by Julian, the emperor, in an epistle to the Jews,ⁿ and in a law of the emperor Honorius,^o employed by the patriarch to gather once a year the *aurum coronarium*, or crown-gold, a tribute annually paid by them to the Roman emperors. But these apostles could not under that notion be extant in our Saviour's time ; though sure we are there was then something like it, Philo the Jew more than once mentioning the *ἱεροπομποὶ καθ' ἑκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν κρυσὸν καὶ ἄργυρον πλείστον κομίζοντες εἰς τὸ ἱερόν, τὸν ἀθροισθέντα ἐκ τῶν ἀπαρχῶν*,^p "the sacred messengers annually sent to collect the holy treasure paid by way of first-fruits, and to carry it to the temple at Jerusalem." However, our Lord, in conformity to the general custom of those times, of appointing apostles or messengers, as their proxies and deputies to act in

^k Euseb. in Caten. MS. apud Heins. exercit. in Luc. vi.

^m Ibid. c. 11.

^o Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. Tit. viii. l. 14. de Judæis.

^p Lib. de legat. ad Caium, p. 1023. Vid. p. 1035.

^l Hæres. xxx. c. 4.

ⁿ Epist. xxv. p. 153.

their names, called and denominated those apostles, whom he peculiarly chose to represent his person, to communicate his mind and will to the world, and to act as ambassadors or commissioners in his room and stead.

IV. Secondly, we observe that the persons thus deputed by our Saviour were not left uncertain, but reduced to a fixed definite number, confined to the just number of twelve: "he ordained twelve, that they should be with him:"^q a number that seems to carry something of mystery and peculiar design in it, as appears in that the apostles were so careful upon the fall of Judas immediately to supply it. The fathers are very wide and different in their conjectures about the reason of it. St. Augustine thinks our Lord herein had respect to the four quarters of the world,^r which were to be called by the preaching of the gospel, which being multiplied by three, (to denote the Trinity, in whose name they were to be called,) make twelve. Tertullian will have them typified by the twelve fountains in Elim,^s the apostles being sent out to water and refresh the dry thirsty world with the knowledge of the truth; by the twelve precious stones in Aaron's breast-plate, to illuminate the church, the garment which Christ, our great high-priest, has put on; by the twelve stones which Joshua chose out of Jordan to lay up within the ark of the testament, respecting the firmness and solidity of the apostles' faith, their being chosen by the true Jesus or Joshua at their baptism in Jordan, and their being admitted in the inner sanctuary of his covenant. By others we are told, that it was shadowed out by the twelve spies taken out of every tribe, and sent to discover the land of promise; or by the twelve gates of the city in Ezekiel's vision; or by the twelve bells appendant to Aaron's garment, "their sound going out into all the world, and their words unto the ends of the earth."^t But it were endless, and to very little purpose, to reckon up all the conjectures of this nature, there being scarce any one number of twelve mentioned in the scripture, which is not by some of the ancients adapted and applied to this of the twelve apostles, wherein an ordinary fancy might easily enough pick out a mystery. That which seems to put in the most rational plea, is, that our Lord,

^q Mark iii. 14.

^r In Psalm. ciii. enarr. Serm. iii. a. 2. vol. iv. p. 1150. Vid. in Psalm. lix. enarr. a. 2. vol. iv. p. 578.

^s Adv. Marcion. l. iv. c. 13.

^t J. Mart. dial. cum Tryph. a. 42.

being now about to form a new spiritual commonwealth, a kind of mystical Israel, pitched upon this number, in conformity either to the twelve patriarchs, as founders of the twelve tribes of Israel, or to the twelve *φυλάρχαι*, or chief heads, as standing rulers of those tribes among the Jews, as we shall afterwards possibly more particularly remark." Thirdly, these apostles were immediately called and sent by Christ himself, elected out of the body of his disciples and followers, and received their commission from his own mouth. Indeed, Matthias was not one of the first election, being taken in upon Judas's apostacy after our Lord's ascension into heaven. But besides that he had been one of the seventy disciples, called and sent out by our Saviour, that extraordinary declaration of the divine will and pleasure that appeared in determining his election, was in a manner equivalent to the first election. As for St. Paul, he was not one of the twelve, taken in as a supernumerary apostle, but yet an apostle as well as they, and that "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ,"^x as he pleads his own cause against the insinuations of those impostors who traduced him as an apostle only at the second hand; whereas he was immediately called by Christ as well as they, and in a more extraordinary manner: they were called by him, while he was yet in his state of meanness and humiliation; he, when Christ was now advanced upon the throne, and appeared to him encircled with those glorious emanations of brightness and majesty which he was not able to endure. I observe no more concerning this, than that an immediate call has ever been accounted so necessary to give credit and reputation to their doctrine, that the most notorious impostors have pretended to it. Thus Manes, the founder of the Manichæan sect,^y was wont in his epistles to style himself the Apostle of Jesus Christ; as pretending himself to be the person whom the Lord had promised to send into the world, and that accordingly the Holy Ghost was actually sent in him; and therefore he constituted twelve disciples always to attend his person, in imitation of the number of the apostolic college. And how often the Turkish impostor does, upon this account, call himself the Apostle of God, every one that has but once seen the Alcoran is able to tell.

^u See St. Peter's Life, sect. iii. num. 2.

^x Gal. i. 1.

^y August. de Hæres. c. 46. vol. viii. p. 17.

V. Fourthly, the main work and employment of these apostles was to preach the gospel, to establish Christianity, and to govern the church that was to be founded, as Christ's immediate deputies and vicegerents: they were to instruct men in the doctrines of the gospel, to disciple the world, and to baptize and initiate men into the faith of Christ; and to constitute and ordain guides and ministers of religion, persons peculiarly set apart for holy ministrations, to censure and punish obstinate and contumacious offenders, to compose and over-rule disorders and divisions, to command or countermand, as occasion was, being vested with an extraordinary authority and power of disposing things for the edification of the church. This office the apostles never exercised in its full extent and latitude during Christ's residence upon earth; for though upon their election he sent them forth to preach and to baptize, yet this was only a narrow and temporary employment, and they quickly returned to their private stations, the main power being still executed and administered by Christ himself, the complete exercise whereof was not actually devolved upon them, till he was ready to leave the world: for then it was that he told them,^a "as my father hath sent me, even so send I you: receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." Whereby he conferred, in some proportion, the same authority upon them which he himself had derived from his Father. Fifthly, this commission given to the apostles was unlimited and universal, not only in respect of power, as enabling them to discharge all acts of religion relating either to ministry or government, but in respect of place;^a not confining them to this or that particular province, but leaving them the whole world as their diocese to preach in, they being *destinati nationibus magistri*; in Tertullian's phrase,^b designed to be the masters and instructors of all nations: so runs their commission;^c "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," that is, to all men; the *πᾶσα κτίσις* of the evangelist answering to the לְכָל הַבְּרִיָּה amongst the Jews, "to all creatures," whereby they used to denote all men in

^a John xx. 21—23.

^b Chrysost. Serm. περ. τοῦ, ὅτι χρῆσιμος ἡ τῶν γραφῶν ἀναγνώσις. vol. viii. p. 115. edit. Savil.

^c De præscript. Hæret. c. 20.

^c Mark xvi. 15.

general, but especially the Gentiles in opposition to the Jews. Indeed, while our Saviour lived, the apostolical ministry extended no further than Judea; but he being gone to heaven, the "partition wall was broken down," and their way was open into all places and countries. And herein how admirably did the Christian economy transcend the Jewish dispensation? The preaching of the prophets, like the light that comes in at the window,^d was confined only to the house of Israel, while the doctrine of the gospel preached by the apostles was like the light of the sun in the firmament, that diffused its beams and propagated its heat and influence into all quarters of the world; "their sound going out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." It is true, for the more prudent and orderly management of things, they are generally said by the ancients to have divided the world into so many quarters and portions, to which they were severally to betake themselves; Peter to Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, &c., St. John to Asia, St. Andrew to Scythia, &c. But they did not strictly tie themselves to those particular provinces that were assigned to them, but, as occasion was, made excursions into other parts; though for the main they had a more peculiar inspection over those parts that were allotted to them, usually residing at some principal city of the province, as St. John at Ephesus, St. Philip at Hierapolis, &c. whence they might have a more convenient prospect of affairs round about them. And hence it was that these places more peculiarly got the title of apostolical churches, because first planted, or eminently watered and cultivated by some apostle, *matrices et originales fidei*, as Tertullian calls them,^e "mother-churches, and the originals of the faith;" because here the Christian doctrine was first sown, and hence planted and propagated to the countries round about, *ecclesias apud unamquamque civitatem condiderunt, a quibus traducem fidei et semina doctrinæ, cæteræ exinde ecclesiæ mutuatae sunt*,^f as his own words are.

VI. In pursuance of this general commission, we find the apostles, not long after our Lord's ascension, traversing almost all parts of the then known world; St. Andrew in Scythia and those northern countries, St. Thomas and Bartholomew in India,

^d Macar. Homil. xiv. p. 77. ed. 1621.

^e De præscript. Hæret. c. 21.

^f Ibid. c. 20.

St. Simon and St. Mark in Africa, Egypt, and the parts of Libya and Mauritania; St. Paul, and probably Peter and some others, in the farthest regions of the West: and all this done in the space of less than forty years, viz. before the destruction of the Jewish state by Titus and the Roman army. For so our Lord had expressly foretold, that "the gospel of the kingdom should be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, before the end came;"^s that is, the end of the Jewish state, which the apostles a little before had called "the end of the world,"^h *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος*, the shutting up or consummation of the age, the putting a final period to that present state and dispensation that the Jews were under. And indeed strange it is to consider, that in so few years these evangelical messengers should overrun all countries; with what an incredible swiftness did the Christian faith, like lightning, pierce from east to west, and diffuse itself over all quarters of the world; and that not only unassisted by any secular advantages, but in defiance of the most fierce and potent opposition, which every where set itself against it? It is true, the impostures of Mohammed in a very little time gained a great part of the East. But besides that this was not comparable to the universal spreading of Christianity, his doctrine was calculated on purpose to gratify men's lusts; and especially to comply with the loose and wanton manners of the East, and, which is above all, had the sword to hew out its way before it: and we know how ready, even without force, in all changes and revolutions of the world, the conquered have been to follow the religion of the conquerors. Whereas the apostles had no visible advantages, nay, had all the enraged powers of the world to contend against them. And yet in despite of all went on in triumph, and quickly made their way into those places where, for so many ages, no other conquest ever came; "those parts of Britain (as Tertullian observesⁱ) which were unconquerable and unapproachable by the power of the Roman armies, submitting their necks to the yoke of Christ:" a mighty evidence (as he there argues) of Christ's divinity, and that he was the true Messiah. And indeed no reasonable account can be given of the strange and successful progress of the Christian religion in those first ages of it, but that it was the birth of heaven, and had a divine and invisible power going along with

^s Matt. xxiv. 14.^h Matt. xxiv. 3.ⁱ Adv. Jud. c. 7.

it to succeed and prosper it. St. Chrysostom discourses this argument at large,^j some of whose elegant reasonings I shall here transcribe. He tells the Gentile, (with whom he was disputing,) that he would not prove Christ's deity by a demonstration from heaven, by his creation of the world, his great and stupendous miracles, his raising the dead, curing the blind, expelling devils, nor from the mighty promises of a future state, and the resurrection of the dead, (which an infidel might easily not only question, but deny,) but from what was sufficiently evident and obvious to the meanest idiot, his planting and propagating Christianity in the world. "For it is not (says he) in the power of a mere man, in so short a time to encircle the world, to compass sea and land, and in matters of so great importance to rescue mankind from the slavery of absurd and unreasonable customs, and the powerful tyranny of evil habits; and these not Romans only, but Persians, and the most barbarous nations of the world: a reformation which he wrought not by force and the power of the sword, nor by pouring into the world numerous legions and armies; but by a few inconsiderable men, (no more at first than eleven,) a company of obscure and mean, simple and illiterate, poor and helpless, naked and unarmed persons, who had scarce a shoe to tread on, or a coat to cover them. And yet by these he persuaded so great a part of mankind to be able freely to reason, not only of things of the present, but of a future state; to renounce the laws of their country, and throw off those ancient and inveterate customs, which had taken root for so many ages, and planted others in their room; and reduced men from those easy ways, whereinto they were hurried, into the more rugged and difficult paths of virtue: all which he did, while he had to contend with opposite powers, and when he himself had undergone the most ignominious death, 'even the death of the cross.'" Afterwards he addresses himself to the Jew, and discourses with him much after the same rate. "Consider, (says he,^k) and bethink thyself, what it is in so short a time to fill the whole world with so many famous churches, to convert so many nations to the faith, to prevail with men to forsake the religion of their country, to root up their rites and customs, to shake off the empire of lust and pleasure, and the laws of vice, like dust; to abolish and abominate their temples and their altars,

^j Lib. quod Chr. sit Deus, s. l. vol. i. p. 558.

^k Ibid. s. 12. p. 575.

their idols and their sacrifices, their profane and impious festivals, as dirt and dung; and instead thereof to set up Christian altars in all places, among the Romans, Persians, Scythians, Moors, and Indians; and not there only, but in the countries beyond this world of ours. For even the British islands that lie beyond the ocean, and those that are in it, have felt the power of the Christian faith; churches and altars being erected there to the service of Christ. A matter truly great and admirable, and which would clearly have demonstrated a divine and supereminent power, although there had been no opposition in the case, but that all things had run on calmly and smoothly, to think that in so few years the Christian faith should be able to reclaim the whole world from its vicious customs, and to win them over to other manners, more laborious and difficult, repugnant both to their native inclinations and to the laws and principles of their education, and such as obliged them to a more strict and accurate course of life; and these persons not one or two, not twenty or an hundred, but in a manner all mankind: and this brought about by no other instruments than a few rude and unlearned, private and unknown tradesmen, who had neither estate nor reputation, learning nor eloquence, kindred nor country, to recommend them to the world; a few fishermen and tent-makers, and whom, distinguished by their language as well as their religion, the rest of the world scorned as barbarous. And yet these were the men by whom our Lord built up his church, and extended it from one end of the world unto the other." Other considerations there are with which the father does urge and illustrate this argument, which I forbear to insist on in this place.

VII. Sixthly, the power and authority conveyed by this commission to the apostles, was equally conferred upon all of them. They were all chosen at the same time, all equally empowered to preach and baptize, all equally intrusted with the power of binding and loosing, all invested with the same mission, and all equally furnished with the same gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost. Indeed, the advocates of the church of Rome do with a mighty zeal and fierceness contend for St. Peter's being head and prince of the apostles, advanced by Christ to a supremacy and prerogative not only above, but over the rest of the apostles; and not without reason, the fortunes of that church being concerned in the

supremacy of St. Peter. No wonder, therefore, they ransack all corners, press and force in whatever may but seem to give countenance to it: witness those thin and miserable shifts, which Bellarmine calls arguments, to prove and make it good; so utterly devoid of all rational conviction, so unable to justify themselves to sober and considering men, that a man would think they had been contrived for no other purpose than to cheat fools, and make wise men laugh. And the truth is, nothing with me more shakes the reputation of the wisdom of that learned man than his making use of such weak and trifling arguments in so important and concerning an article, so vital and essential to the constitution of that church. As when he argues Peter's superiority from the mere changing of his name,¹ (for what is this to supremacy? besides, that it was not done to him alone, the same being done to James and John,) from his being first reckoned up in the catalogue of apostles, his walking with Christ upon the water, his paying tribute for his master and himself, his being commanded to let down the net, and Christ's teaching in Peter's ship, (and this ship must denote the church, and Peter's being owner of it, entitle him to be supreme ruler and governor of the church; so Bellarmine, in terms as plain as he could well express it,) from Christ's first washing Peter's feet, (though the story recorded by the evangelist says no such thing,) and his foretelling only his death: all which, and many more prerogatives of St. Peter, to the number of no less than twenty-eight, are summoned in to give in evidence in this cause; and many of these too drawn out of apocryphal and supposititious authors, and not only uncertain, but absurd and fabulous; and yet upon such arguments as these do they found this paramount authority: a plain evidence of a desperate and sinking cause, when such twigs must be laid hold on to support and keep it above water. Had they suffered Peter to be content with a primacy of order, (which his age and gravity seemed to challenge for him,) no wise and peaceable man would have denied it, as being a thing ordinarily practised among equals, and necessary to the well-governing a society; but when nothing but a primacy of power will serve the turn, as if the rest of the apostles had been inferior to him, this may by no means be granted, as being expressly contrary to the positive determination of our Saviour, when the apostles were

¹ De Rom. Pontif. l. i. c. 17, 18. et seq.

contending about this very thing, "which of them should be accounted the greatest," he thus quickly decides the case:^m "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But ye shall not be so: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Than which nothing could have been more peremptorily spoken, to rebuke this naughty spirit of preeminence. Nor do we ever find St. Peter himself laying claim to any such power, or the apostles giving him the least shadow of it. In the whole course of his affairs there are no intimations of this matter; in his epistle he styles himself but their fellow-presbyter, and expressly forbids the governors of the church to "lord it over God's heritage." When despatched by the rest of the apostles upon a message to Sámaria, he never disputes their authority to do it; when accused by them for going in unto the Gentiles, does he stand upon his prerogative? no, but submissively apologizes for himself; nay, when smartly reprov'd by St. Paul at Antioch, (when, if ever, his credit lay at stake,) do we find him excepting against it as an affront to his supremacy, and a saucy controlling his superior? surely the quite contrary; he quietly submitted to the reproof, as one that was sensible how justly he had deserved it. Nor can it be supposed but that St. Paul would have carried it towards him with a greater reverence, had any such peculiar sovereignty been then known to the world. How confidently does St. Paul assert himself to be no whit "inferior to the chiefest apostles," not to Peter himself? the gospel of the uncircumcision being committed to him, as that of the circumcision was to Peter. Is Peter oft named first among the apostles? elsewhere others, sometimes James, sometimes Paul and Apollos, are placed before him. Did Christ honour him with some singular commendations? an honourable elogium conveys no supereminent power and sovereignty. Was he dear to Christ? We know another, that was the beloved disciple. So little warrant is there to exalt one above the rest, where Christ made all alike.ⁿ If from scripture we descend to the ancient writers of the church, we shall find, that though the fathers bestow very great and honourable titles upon Peter, yet

^m Matt. xx. 25, 26, 27. Luke xxii. 24, 25, 26.

ⁿ "Hoc erant utique et cæteri apostoli, quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio prælitæ et honoris et potestatis." Cyprian. de Unitat. Eccles. p. 107, 8.

they give the same, or what are equivalent, to others of the apostles. Hesychius^o styles St. James the Great, "the brother of our Lord, the commander of the new Jerusalem, the prince of priests, the exarch or chief of the apostles, ἐν κεφαλοῖς κορυφὴν, the top or crown amongst the heads, the great light amongst the lamps, the most illustrious and resplendent amongst the stars: it was Peter that preached, but it was James that made the determination," &c. Of St. Andrew he gives this encomium,^p that "he was the sacerdotal trumpet, the first-born of the apostolical choir, πρωτοπαγῆς τῆς ἐκκλησίας στύλος, the prime and firm pillar of the church, Peter before Peter, the foundation of the foundation, the first fruits of the beginning." Peter and John are said to be ἰσότιμοι ἀλλήλοις, "equally honourable," by St. Cyril,^q with his whole synod of Alexandria. "St. John (says Chrysostom^r) was Christ's beloved, the pillar of all the churches in the world, who had the keys of heaven, drank of the Lord's cup, was washed with his baptism, and with confidence lay in his bosom." And of St. Paul he tells us,^s that he was "the most excellent of all men, the teacher of the world, the bridegroom of Christ, the planter of the church, the wise master-builder, greater than the apostles," and much more to the same purpose. Elsewhere he says,^t that the care of the world was committed to him, that nothing could be more noble or illustrious; yea, that (his miracles considered) he was more excellent than kings themselves. And a little after, he calls him "the tongue of the earth, the light of the churches, τὸν θεμέλιον τῆς πίστεως, τὸν στύλον καὶ ἐδραῖωμα τῆς ἀληθείας, the foundation of the faith, the pillar and ground of truth."^u And in a discourse on the purpose, wherein he compares Peter and Paul together, he makes them of equal esteem and virtue:^x "τί Πέτρον μείζον; τι δὲ Παύλου ἴσον; what greater than Peter? what equal to Paul? a blessed pair! ἡ πεπιστευθεῖσα ὅλου τοῦ κόσμου τὰς ψυχὰς, who had the souls of the whole world committed to their charge." But instances of this nature were endless and infinite.

^o Orat. in S. Jac. apud Phot. Cod. CCLXXV. col. 1525.

^p Encom. S. Thom. ibid. Cod. CCLXIX. col. 1488.

^q In Conc. Ephes. Concil. vol. ii. p. 209.

^r Prolog. in Joan. Hom. i. s. l. vol. viii. p. 2.

^s De Pet. fil. Zeb. s. 3. vol. i. p. 517.

^t In illud, sal. Aquil. et Prisc. s. 2. vol. iii. p. 174.

^u Ibid. s. 3. p. 176.

^x Serm. in Petr. et Paul. s. 1. vol. viii. p. 8. *inter spuria*.

If the fathers at any time style Peter “prince of the apostles,” they mean no more by it, than the best and purest Latin writers mean by *princeps*, the first or chief person of the number, more considerable than the rest, either for his age or zeal. Thus Eusebius tells us,^y Peter was “*τῶν λοιπῶν ἀπάντων προήγωρος*, the prolocutor of all the rest, *ἀρετῆς ἕνεκα*, for the greatness and generosity of his mind;” that is, in Chrysostom’s language,^z he was “the mouth and chief of the apostles, *ὁ πανταχοῦ θερμὸς*, because eager and forward at every turn, and ready to answer those questions which were put to others.” In short, as he had no prerogative above the rest, besides his being the chairman and president of the assembly, so was it granted to him upon no other considerations than those of his age, zeal, and gravity, for which he was more eminent than the rest.

VIII. We proceed next to inquire into the fitness and qualification of the persons commissioned for this employment; and we shall find them admirably qualified to discharge it, if we consider this following account. First, they immediately received the doctrine of the gospel from the mouth of Christ himself; he intended them for *legati à latere*, his peculiar ambassadors to the world, and therefore furnished them with instructions from his own mouth; and in order hereunto, he trained them up for some years under his own discipline and institution: he made them to understand the “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, when to others it was not given;” treated them with the affection of a father, and the freedom and familiarity of a friend: “Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth, but I have called you friends: for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.”^a They heard all his sermons, were privy both to his public and private discourses; what he preached abroad, he expounded to them at home; he gradually instructed them in the knowledge of divine things, and imparted to them the notions and mysteries of the gospel, not all at once, but “as they were able to bear them:” by which means they were sufficiently capable of giving a satisfactory account of that doctrine to others, which had been so immediately, so frequently communicated to themselves. Secondly, they were infallibly secured

^y Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 14.

^z In Matt. Hom. liv. s. l. vol. vii. p. 546.

^a John xv. 15.

from error in delivering the doctrines and principles of Christianity: for though they were not absolutely privileged from failures and miscarriages in their lives, (these being of more personal and private consideration,) yet were they infallible in their doctrine, this being a matter whereupon the salvation and eternal interests of men did depend. And for this end, they had the "spirit of truth" promised to them, who should "guide them into all truth."^b Under the conduct of this unerring guide, they all steered the same course, taught and spake the same things, though at different times, and in distant places; and for what was consigned to writing, "all scripture was given by inspiration of God, and the holy men spake not, but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Hence that exact and admirable harmony that is in all their writings and relations, as being all equally dictated by the same spirit of truth. Thirdly, they had been eyewitnesses of all the material passages of our Saviour's life, continually conversant with him from the commencing of his public ministry till his ascension into heaven; they had surveyed all his actions, seen all his miracles, observed the whole method of his conversation, and some of them attended him in his most private solitudes and retirements. And this could not but be a very rational satisfaction to the minds of men, when the publishers of the gospel solemnly declared to the world, that they reported nothing concerning our Saviour but what they had seen with their own eyes, and of the truth whereof they were as competent judges as the acutest philosopher in the world. Nor could there be any just reason to suspect that they imposed upon men in what they delivered; for besides their naked plainness and simplicity in all other passages of their lives, they cheerfully submitted to the most exquisite hardships, tortures, and sufferings, merely to attest the truth of what they published to the world. Next to the evidence of our own senses, no testimony is more valid and forcible, than his who relates what himself has seen. Upon this account our Lord told his apostles, "that they should be witnesses to him, both in Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth."^c And so necessary a qualification of an apostle was this thought to be, that it was almost the only condition propounded in the choice of a new apostle after the fall of Judas: "Wherefore (says

^b John xvi. 13.^c Acts i. 8.

Peter) of these men that have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.”^d Accordingly, we find the apostles constantly making use of this argument as the most rational evidence to convince those whom they had to deal with: “We are witnesses of all things which Jesus did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he that is ordained of God to be judge of the quick and dead.”^e Thus St. John, after the same way of arguing, appeals to sensible demonstration: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us.”^f This, to name no more, St. Peter thought a sufficient vindication of the apostolical doctrine from the suspicion of forgery and imposture: “We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.”^g God had frequently given testimony to the divinity of our blessed Saviour, by visible manifestations and appearances from heaven, and particularly by an audible voice, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” Now “this voice which came from heaven (says he) we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.”

IX. Fourthly, the apostles were invested with a power of working miracles, as the readiest means to procure their religion a firm belief and entertainment in the minds of men. For miracles are the great confirmation of the truth of any doctrine, and the most rational evidence of a divine commission. For

^d Acts i. 21, 22.

^f 1 John i. 1, 2, 3.

^e Acts x. 39, 40, &c.

^g 2 Pet. i. 16, 17.

seeing God only can create, and control the laws of nature, produce something out of nothing, and call things that are not, as if they were, give eyes to them that were born blind, raise the dead, &c. things plainly beyond all possible powers of nature; no man that believes the wisdom and goodness of an infinite being, can suppose that this God of truth should affix his seal to a lie, or communicate this power to any that would abuse it, to confirm and countenance delusions and impostures. Nicodemus's reasoning was very plain and convictive,^h when he concludes "that Christ must needs be a teacher come from God, for that no man could do those miracles that he did, except God were with him." The force of which argument lies here, that nothing but a divine power can work miracles, and that Almighty God cannot be supposed miraculously to assist any but those whom he himself sends upon his own errand. The stupid and barbarous Lycaonians, when they beheld the man who had been a cripple from his mother's womb, cured by St. Paul in an instant, only with the speaking of a word, saw that there was something in it more than human, and therefore concluded that "the gods were come down to them in the likeness of men."ⁱ Upon this account St. Paul reckons miracles among the *τὰ σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου*, the "signs" and evidences "of an apostle;"^k whom therefore Chrysostom brings in elegantly pleading for himself,^l that though he could not shew, as the signs of his priesthood and ministry, long robes and gaudy vestments, with bells sounding at their borders, as the Aaronical priests did of old, though he had no golden crowns or holy mitres, yet could he produce what was infinitely more venerable and regardable than all these, unquestionable signs and miracles: he came not with altars and oblations, with a number of strange and symbolical rites; but what was greater, raised the dead, cast out devils, cured the blind, healed the lame, "making the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through many signs and wonders wrought by the power of the Spirit of God." These were the things that clearly shewed that their mission and ministry was not from men, nor taken up of their own heads, but that they acted herein by a divine warrant and authority. That therefore it might plainly appear to the world, that they did not falsify in what they said.

^h John iii. 4.ⁱ Acts xiv. 10, 11.^k 2 Cor. xii. 12.^l Chrys. Hom. xxix. in Rom. s. 2. vol. ix. p. 731.

or deliver any more than God had given them in commission, he enabled them to do strange and miraculous operations, "bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost."^m This was a power put into the first draught of their commission, when confined only to the cities of Israel: "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand; heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give:"ⁿ but more fully confirmed upon them, when our Lord went to heaven, then he told them,^o that "these signs should follow them that believe; that in his name they should cast out devils, and speak with new tongues; that they should take up serpents, and if they drank any deadly thing, it should not hurt them; that they should lay hands on the sick, and they should recover:" and the event was accordingly, "for they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." When Paul and Barnabas came up to the council at Jerusalem, this was one of the first things they gave an account of,^p "all the multitude keeping silence, while they declared what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them." Thus the very "shadow of Peter, as he passed by, cured the sick:" thus "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul; so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs, or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."^q So that besides the innate characters of divinity which the Christian religion brought along with it, containing nothing but what was highly reasonable, and very becoming God to reveal; it had the highest external evidence that any religion was capable of, the attestation of great and unquestionable miracles, done not once or twice, not privately and in corners, not before a few simple and credulous persons, but frequently and at every turn, publicly and in places of the most solemn concourse, before the wisest and most judicious inquirers, and this power of miracles continued not only during the apostles' time, but for some ages after.

X. But because, besides miracles in general, the Scripture takes particular notice of many gifts and powers of the Holy

^m Heb. ii. 4.

ⁿ Matt. x. 7, 8.

^o Mark xvi. 17—20.

^p Acts xv. 12.

^q Acts xix. 11, 12.

Ghost conferred upon the apostles and first preachers of the gospel, it may not be amiss to consider some of the chiefest and most material of them, as we find them enumerated by the apostle,^r only premising this observation, that though these gifts were distinctly distributed to persons of an inferior order, so that one had this, and another that, yet were they (probably) all conferred upon the apostles, and doubtless in larger proportions than upon the rest. First, we take notice of the “gift of prophecy,” a clear evidence of divine inspiration, and an extraordinary mission, “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”^s It had been for many ages the signal and honourable privilege of the Jewish church, and that the Christian economy might challenge as sacred regards from men, and that it might appear that God had not withdrawn his spirit from his church in this new state of things, it was revived under the dispensation of the gospel, according to that famous prophecy of Joel, exactly accomplished (as Peter told the Jews) upon the day of pentecost, when the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost were so plentifully shed upon the apostles and primitive Christians; “this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, It shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God,) I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants, and on my handmaidens, I will pour out in those days of my spirit, and they shall prophesy.”^t It lay, in general, in revealing and making known to others the mind of God, but discovered itself in particular instances; partly in foretelling things to come, and what should certainly happen in aftertimes: a thing set beyond the reach of any finite understanding; for though such effects as depend upon natural agents, or moral and political causes, may be foreseen by studious and considering persons, yet the knowledge of futurities, things purely contingent, that merely depend upon men’s choice, and their mutable and uncertain wills, can only fall under his view, who at once beholds things past, present, and to come. Now this was conferred upon the apostles and some of the first Christians, as appears from many instances in the history of the apostolic acts, and we find the apostles’ writings frequently interspersed with prophetic predictions concerning the great apostacy from

^r 1 Cor. xii. 9, 10.^s Rev. xix. 10.^t Joel ii. 28, 29. Acts ii. 16, 17, 18.

the faith, the universal corruption and degeneracy of manners, the rise of particular heresies, the coming of Antichrist, and several other things "which the spirit said expressly should come to pass in the latter times;" besides that St. John's whole book of Revelation is almost entirely made up of prophecies concerning the future state and condition of the church. Sometimes by this spirit of prophecy God declared things that were of present concernment to the exigencies of the church, as when he signified to them that they should set apart Paul and Barnabas for the conversion of the Gentiles, and many times immediately designed particular persons to be pastors and governors of the church. Thus we read of "the gift that was given to Timothy by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery," that is, his ordination, to which he was particularly pointed out by some prophetic designation. But the main use of this prophetic gift in those times, was to explain some of the more difficult and particular parts of the Christian doctrine, especially to expound and apply the ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah and his kingdom in their public assemblies; whence the "gift of prophecy" is explained by "understanding all mysteries, and all knowledge,"^u that is, the most dark and difficult places of scripture, the types and figures, the ceremonies and prophecies of the Old Testament. And thus we are commonly to understand those words, "prophets" and "prophesying," that so familiarly occur in the New Testament. "Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;"^x that is, expound scripture according to the generally received principles of faith and life. So the apostle elsewhere prescribing rules for the decent and orderly managing of divine worship in their public assemblies, "let the prophets (says he) speak two or three," (that is, at the same assembly,) "and let the other judge:" and if, while any is thus expounding, another has a divine *afflatus*, whereby he is more particularly enabled to explain some difficult and emergent passage, "let the first hold his peace: for ye may all," all that have this gift, "prophesy one by one," that so thus orderly proceeding, "all may learn, and all may be comforted." Nor can the first pretend that this interruption is an unseasonable check to his revelation, seeing he

^u 1 Cor. xiii. 2.^x Rom. xii. 6.^y 1 Cor. xiv. 29.

may command himself; for though among the Gentiles the prophetic and ecstatic impulse did so violently press upon the inspired person, that he could not govern himself, yet in the church of God "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets," may be so ruled and restrained by them, as to make way for others. This order of Christian prophets considered as a distinct ministry by itself, is constantly placed next to the apostolical office, and is frequently by St. Paul preferred before any other spiritual gifts then bestowed upon the church. When this spirit of prophecy ceased in the Christian church, we cannot certainly find. It continued some competent time beyond the apostolic age. Justin Martyr expressly tells Trypho the Jew,² *Παρά ἡμῖν καὶ μέχρι νῦν προφητικὰ χαρίσματα ἔστιν*, "the gifts of prophecy are even yet extant among us;" an argument, as he there tells him, that those things which had of old been the great privileges of their church, were now translated into the Christian church. And Eusebius,^a speaking of a revelation made to one Alcibiades, who lived about the time of Irenæus, adds, that the divine grace had not withdrawn its presence from the church, but that they still had the Holy Ghost as their counsellor to direct them.

XI. Secondly, they had "the gifts of discerning spirits," whereby they were enabled to discover the truth or falsehood of men's pretences, whether their gifts were real or counterfeit, and their persons truly inspired or not. For many men, acted only by diabolical impulses, might entitle themselves to divine inspirations, and others might be imposed upon by their delusions, and mistake their dreams and fancies for the Spirit's dictates and revelations; or might so subtly and artificially counterfeit revelations, that they might with most pass for current, especially in those times when these supernatural gifts were so common and ordinary; and our Lord himself had frequently told them that "false prophets would arise," and that many would confidently plead for themselves before him, that they had "prophesied in his name." That therefore the church might not be imposed upon, God was pleased to endue the apostles, and it may be some others, with an immediate faculty of discerning the chaff from the wheat, true from false prophets; nay, to know when the true prophets delivered the revelations

² Dial. cum Tryph. s. 82.

^a Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. 3.

of the Spirit, and when they expressed only their own conceptions. This was a mighty privilege, but yet seems to me to have extended farther, to judge of the sincerity or hypocrisy of men's hearts in the profession of religion, that so bad men being discovered, suitable censures and punishments might be passed upon them, and others cautioned to avoid them. Thus Peter at first sight discovered Ananias and Sapphira, and the rotten hypocrisy of their intentions, before there was any external evidence in the case; and told Simon Magus, though baptized before, upon his embracing Christianity, "that his heart was not right in the sight of God: for I perceive (says he) that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."^b Thirdly, the apostles had the "gift of tongues," furnished with variety of utterance, able to speak on a sudden several languages which they had never learnt, as occasion was administered, and the exigencies of persons and nations, with whom they conversed, did require. For the apostles being principally designed to convert the world, and to plant Christianity in all countries and nations, it was absolutely necessary that they should be able readily to express their minds in the languages of those countries to which they addressed themselves: seeing otherwise it would have been a work of time and difficulty, and not consistent with the term of the apostles' lives, had they been first to learn the different languages of those nations, before they could have preached the gospel to them. Hence this gift was diffused upon the apostles in larger measures and proportions than upon other men: "I speak with tongues more than ye all," says St. Paul;^c that is, than all the gifted persons in the church of Corinth. Our Lord had told the apostles before his departure from them, "that they should be endued with power from on high," which upon the day of pentecost was particularly made good in this instance, when in a moment they were enabled to speak almost all the languages of the then known world, and this as a specimen and first-fruits of the rest of those miraculous powers that were conferred upon them.

XII. A fourth gift was that of interpretation, or unfolding to others what had been delivered in an unknown tongue. For the Christian assemblies in those days were frequently made up of men of different nations, and who could not understand what

^b Acts viii. 21. 23.

^c 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

the apostles or others had spoken to the congregation ; this God supplied by this gift of interpretation, enabling some to interpret what others did not understand, and to speak it to them in their own native language. St. Paul largely discourses the necessity of this gift, in order to the instructing and edifying of the church,^d seeing without it their meetings could be no better than the assembly of Babel after the confusion of languages, where one man must needs be a barbarian to another, and all the praying and preaching of the minister of the assembly be, to many, altogether fruitless and unprofitable, and no better than a "speaking into the air." What is the speaking, though with the "tongue of angels," to them that do not understand it? How can the idiot and unlearned say Amen, who understands not the language of him that giveth thanks? The duty may be done with admirable quaintness and accuracy, but what is he the better, from whom it is locked up in an unknown tongue? A consideration that made the apostle solemnly profess, that "he had rather speak five words in the church with his understanding, that by his voice he may teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue. Therefore if any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be but by two, or at most by three, and let one interpret" what the rest have spoken : "but if there be no interpreter," none present able to do this, "let him keep silence in the church, and speak to himself and to God."^e A man that impartially reads this discourse of the apostle, may wonder how the church of Rome, in defiance of it, can so openly practise, so confidently defend their Bible and divine services in an unknown tongue, so flatly repugnant to the dictates of common reason, the usage of the first Christian church, and these plain apostolical commands. But this is not the only instance wherein that church has departed both from scripture, reason, and the practice of the first and purest ages of Christianity. Indeed, there is some cause why they are so zealous to keep both scripture and their divine worship in a strange language, lest by reading the one, the people should become wise enough to discover the gross errors and corruptions of the other. Fifthly, the apostles had the "gift of healing," of curing diseases without the arts of physic ; the most inveterate distempers being equally removable by an Almighty power, and

^d 1 Cor. xiv.^e 1 Cor. xiv. 19, 27, 28.

vanishing at their speaking of a word. This begot an extraordinary veneration for them and their religion among the common sort of men, who, as they are strongest moved with sensible effects, so are most taken with those miracles that are beneficial to the life of man. Hence the infinite cures done in every place, God mercifully providing that the body should partake with the soul in the advantages of the gospel, the cure of the one ushering in, many times, the conversion of the other. This gift was very common in those early days, bestowed not upon the apostles only, but the ordinary governors of the church, who were wont "to lay their hands upon the sick,"^f and sometimes to "anoint them with oil," (a symbolic rite in use among the Jews, to denote the grace of God,) and "to pray over," and for "them, in the name of the Lord Jesus," whereby, upon a hearty confession and forsaking of their sins, both health and pardon were at once bestowed upon them. How long this gift, with its appendant ceremony of unction, lasted in the church, is not easy to determine; that it was in use in Tertullian's time,^g we learn from the instance he gives us of Proculus, a Christian, who cured the emperor Severus by anointing him with oil; for which the emperor had him in great honour, and kept him with him at court all his life: it afterwards vanishing by degrees, as all other miraculous powers, as Christianity gained firm footing in the world. As for extreme unction, so generally maintained and practised in the church of Rome, nay, and by them made a sacrament, I doubt it will receive very little countenance from this primitive usage. Indeed, could they as easily restore sick men to health, as they can anoint them with oil, I think nobody would contradict them; but till they can pretend to the one, I think it unreasonable they should use the other. The best is, though founding it upon this apostolical practice, they have turned it to a quite contrary purpose, instead of recovering men to life and health, to dispose and fit them for dying, when all hopes of life are taken from them.

XIII. Sixthly, the apostles were invested with a power of immediately inflicting corporal punishments upon great and notorious sinners; and this probably is that which he means by his *ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων*, "operations of powers," or "working miracles,"^h which surely cannot be meant of miracles in general,

^f Jam. v. 14, 15, 16.

^g Ad Scapul. c. 4.

^h 1 Cor. xii. 10.

being reckoned up amongst the particular gifts of the Holy Ghost, nor is there any other to which it can with equal probability refer. A power to inflict diseases upon the body, as when St. Paul struck Elymas the sorcerer with blindness: and sometimes extending to the loss of life itself, as in the sad instance of Ananias and Sapphira. This was the *virga apostolica*, the rod (mentioned by St. Paulⁱ) which the apostles held and shook over scandalous and insolent offenders, and sometimes laid upon them: "What will ye? shall I come to you with a rod? or in love, and the spirit of meekness?" Where observe (says Chrysostom^k) how the apostle tempers his discourse; the love and meekness, and his desire to know, argued care and kindness; but the rod spake dread and terror: a rod of severity and punishment, and which sometimes mortally chastised the offender. Elsewhere he frequently gives intimations of this power, when he has to deal with stubborn and incorrigible persons: "Having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled; for though I should boast something more of our authority, (which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction,) I should not be ashamed; that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters."^l And he again puts them in mind of it at the close of his epistle: "I told you before, and foretell you as if I were present the second time, and being absent now, I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all others, that if I come again I will not spare."^m But he hoped these smart warnings would supersede all farther severity against them: "Therefore I write these things, being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction."ⁿ Of this nature was the "delivering over persons unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh,"^o the chastising the body by some present pain or sickness, "that the spirit might be saved" by being brought to a seasonable repentance. Thus he dealt with Hymenæus and Alexander, who had "made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience; he delivered them unto Satan, that they might learn not to blas-

ⁱ 1 Cor. iv. 21.

^k Chrysost. Hom. xiv. in 1 ad Cor. s. 2. vol. x. p. 119. et vid. Hieron. in loc.

^l 2 Cor. x. 6, 8, 9.

^m 2 Cor. xiii. 2.

ⁿ 2 Cor. xiii. 10.

^o 1 Cor. v. 5. vid. Chrysost. et Hieron. in loc.

pheme.”^p Nothing being more usual in those times than for persons excommunicate, and cut off from the body of the church, to be presently arrested by Satan, as the common serjeant and executioner, and by him either actually possessed, or tormented in their bodies by some diseases which he brought upon them. And indeed this severe discipline was no more than necessary in those times, when Christianity was wholly destitute of any civil or coercive power to beget and keep up a due reverence and regard to the sentence and determinations of the church, and to secure the laws of religion and the holy censures from being slighted by every bold and contumacious offender. And this effect we find it had after the dreadful instance of Ananias and Sapphira: “Great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.”^q To what has been said concerning these apostolical gifts, let me farther observe, that they had not only these gifts residing in themselves, but a power to bestow them upon others, so that by imposition of hands, or upon hearing and embracing the apostles’ doctrine, and being baptized into the Christian faith, they could confer these miraculous powers upon persons thus qualified to receive them, whereby they were in a moment enabled to speak divers languages, to prophesy, to interpret, and do other miracles, to the admiration and astonishment of all that heard and saw them: a privilege peculiar to the apostles; for we do not find that any inferior order of gifted persons were intrusted with it. And therefore, as Chrysostom well observes,^r though Philip the deacon wrought great miracles at Samaria, to the conversion of many, yea, to the conviction of Simon Magus himself, “yet the Holy Ghost fell upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus,” till Peter and John came down to them, who having “prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost:” which when the magician beheld, he offered the apostles money to enable him, that on whomsoever he laid his hands he might derive these miraculous powers upon them.

XIV. Having seen how fitly furnished the apostles were for the execution of their office, let us in the last place inquire into its duration and continuance. And here it must be considered,

^p 1 Tim. i. 20.

^q Acts v. 11.

^r Chrysost. Hom. xviii. in Act. s. 3. vol. ix. p. 146.

that in the apostolical office there was something extraordinary, and something ordinary. What was extraordinary was their immediate commission derived from the mouth of Christ himself, their unlimited charge to preach the gospel up and down the world, without being tied to any particular places; the supernatural and miraculous powers conferred upon them as apostles; their infallible guidance in delivering the doctrines of the gospel; and these all expired and determined with their persons. The standing and perpetual part of it was to teach and instruct the people in the duties and principles of religion, to administer the sacraments, to constitute guides and officers, and to exercise the discipline and government of the church: and in these they are succeeded by the ordinary rulers and ecclesiastical guides, who were to superintend and discharge the affairs and offices of the church, to the end of the world. Whence it is that bishops and governors came to be styled apostles, as being their successors in ordinary; for so they frequently are in the writings of the church. Thus Timothy, who was bishop of Ephesus, is called an apostle;* Clemens of Rome, Clemens the apostle;† St. Mark, bishop of Alexandria, by Eusebius styled both an apostle and evangelist;‡ Ignatius, a bishop and apostle.⁴ A title that continued in after-ages, especially given to those that were the first planters or restorers of Christianity in any country. In the Coptic Kalendar, published by Mr. Selden,⁵ the seventh day of the month Baschnes, answering to our second of May, is dedicated to the memory of St. Athanasius the apostle. Acacius and Paulus, in their letter to Epiphanius,⁶ style him *νέον ἀπόστολον καὶ κήρυκα*, “a new apostle and preacher:” and Sidonius Apollinaris,⁷ writing to Lupus, bishop of Troyes in France, speaks of “the honour due to his eminent apostleship.” An observation which it were easy enough to confirm by abundant instances, were it either doubtful in itself, or necessary to my purpose; but being neither, I forbear.

* Philostorg. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 2.

† Clem. Alex. Strom. l. iv. c. 17.

‡ Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 24.

⁴ Chrysost. Encom. S. Ignat. a. l. vol. ii. p. 593.

⁵ De Synedr. l. iii. c. 15.

⁶ Præfix. Oper. de Hærea.

⁷ Lib. vi. ep. 4. vid. ep. 7.

THE LIFE OF SAINT PETER.

SECTION I.

OF ST. PETER, FROM HIS BIRTH TILL HIS FIRST COMING TO CHRIST.

Bethsaida, St. Peter's birth-place: its dignity of old, and fate at this day. The time of his birth inquired into. Some errors noted concerning it. His names; Cephas, the imposing of it notes no superiority over the rest of the apostles. The custom of popes assuming a new name at their election to the papacy, whence. His kindred and relations; whether he or Andrew the elder brother. His trade and way of life, what, before his coming to Christ. The Sea of Galilee, and the conveniency of it. The meanness and obscurity of his trade. The remarkable appearances of the Divine Providence in propagating Christianity in the world by mean and unlikely instruments.

THE land of Palestine was, at and before the coming of our blessed Saviour, distinguished into three several provinces, Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. This last was divided into the Upper and the Lower. In the Upper, called also Galilee of the Gentiles, within the division anciently belonging to the tribe of Naphthali, stood Bethsaida, formerly an obscure and inconsiderable village, till lately re-edified and enlarged by Philip the Tetrarch,^a by him advanced to the place and title of a city, replenished with inhabitants, and fortified with power and strength, and in honour of Julia, the daughter of Augustus Cæsar, by him styled Julias. Situate it was upon the banks of the Sea of Galilee, and had a wilderness on the other side, thence called the Desert of Bethsaida, whither our Saviour used often to retire, the privacies and solitudes of the place advantageously ministering to divine contemplations. But Bethsaida was not so remarkable for this adjoining wilderness, as itself was memorable for a worse sort of barrenness, ingratitude and unprofitableness under the influences of Christ's sermons and miracles, thence severely upbraided by him, and threatened with one of his

^a Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. viii. c. 3.

deepest woes,^b “Woe unto thee, Chorazin; woe unto thee, Bethsaida,” &c. A woe that it seems stuck close to it, for whatever it was at this time, one who surveyed it in the last age tells us,^c that it was shrunk again into a very mean and small village, consisting only of a few cottages of Moors and wild Arabs; and later travellers have since assured us, that even these are dwindled away into one poor cottage at this day. So fatally does sin undermine the greatest, the goodliest places; so certainly does God’s word take place, and not one iota, either of his promises or threatenings, fall to the ground. Next to the honour that was done it by our Saviour’s presence, who living most in these parts, frequently resorted hither, it had nothing greater to recommend it to the notice of posterity, than that (besides some others of the apostles) it was the birth-place of St. Peter; a person how inconsiderable soever in his private fortunes, yet of great note and eminency as one of the prime ambassadors of the Son of God, to whom both sacred and ecclesiastical stories give, though not a superiority, a precedency in the college of apostles.

II. The particular time of his birth cannot be recovered, no probable footsteps or intimations being left of it: in the general we may conclude him at least ten years elder than his master; his married condition, and settled course of life at his first coming to Christ, and that authority and respect which the gravity of his person procured him amongst the rest of the apostles, can speak him no less: but for any thing more particular and positive in this matter, I see no reason to affirm. Indeed, might we trust the account which one (who pretends to calculate his nativity with ostentation enough) has given of it, we are told that he was born three years before the blessed Virgin, and just seventeen before the incarnation of our Saviour. But let us view his account.^d

Nat. est. An.	{	ab Orbe cond.	{ 4034 }	Ann.	{	Oct. August.	{	8	Ann.	{	Herodis Reg.	} 20
		à Diluvio	{ 2378 }			à 1 ^o ejus consul.		{ 24 }			ante B. Virg.	
		V. C.	{ 734 }			à pugna Actiac.		{ 12 }			ante Chr. nat.	{ 17

When I met with such a pompous train of epochas, the least I expected was truth and certainty. This computation he grounds upon the date of St. Peter’s death, placed (as elsewhere

^b Matt. xi. 21.

^c J. Cotovic, Itin. Hieros, l. iii. c. 8,

^d Stengel, de S. Petru. c. 1.

he tells us^c) by Bellarmine in the eighty-sixth year of his age; so that recounting from the year of Christ 69, when Peter is commonly said to have suffered, he runs up his age to his birth, and spreads it out into so many several dates. But, alas, all is built upon a sandy bottom. For besides his mistake about the year of the world, few of his dates hold due correspondence. But the worst of it is, that after all this, Bellarmine (upon whose single testimony all this fine fabric is erected) says no such thing,^f but only supposes, merely for argument's sake, that St. Peter might very well be eighty-six (it is erroneously printed seventy-six) years old at the time of his martyrdom. So far will confidence or ignorance, or both, carry men aside, if it could be a mistake, and not rather a bold imposing upon the world. But of this enough, and perhaps more than it deserves.

III. Being circumcised according to the rites of the Mosaic law, the name given him at his circumcision was Simon or Symeon, a name common amongst the Jews, especially in their latter times. This was afterwards by our Saviour not abolished, but additioned with the title of Cephas, which in Syriac (the vulgar language of the Jews at that time) signifying a *stone* or *rock*, was thence derived into the Greek, Πέτρος, and by us Peter: so far was Hesychius out,^g when rendering Πέτρος by ὁ Ἐπιλύων, an expounder or interpreter, probably deriving it from Ἐπερ, which signifies to *explain* and *interpret*. By this new imposition our Lord seemed to denote the firmness and constancy of his faith, and his vigorous activity in building up the church, as a "spiritual house" upon the "true rock, the living and corner-stone, chosen of God, and precious," as St. Peter himself expresses it.^h Nor can our Saviour be understood to have hereby conferred upon him any peculiar supremacy or sovereignty above, much less over, the rest of the apostles; for in respect of the great trust committed to them, and their being sent to plant Christianity in the world, they are all equally styled "foundations:"ⁱ nor is it accountable either to scripture or reason to suppose, that by this name our Lord should design the person of Peter to be that very rock, upon which his church was to be built. In a fond imitation of this new name given to St. Peter,^j

^c Stengel. de S. Petro. c. 49.

^f Bellarm. de Rom. Pontif. l. ii. c. 9.

^g Hesych. in voc. Πέτρος.

^h 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5, 6.

ⁱ Rev. xxi. 14.

^j Pap. Masson. de Episc. Urb. in Serg. iv. fol. 172. p. 2. ex Annal. Vict.

those who pretend to be his successors in the see of Rome, usually lay by their own, and assume a new name upon their advancement to the apostolic chair, it being one of the first questions which the cardinals put to the new-elected pope,^k "by what name he will please to be called." This custom first began about the year 844, when Peter di Bocca-Porco (or Swine's-mouth) being chosen pope, changed his name into Sergius the Second: probably not so much to avoid the uncomeliness of his own name, as if unbefitting the dignity of his place, (for this being but his paternal name would after have been no part of his pontifical style and title,) as out of a mighty reverence to St. Peter, accounting himself not worthy to bear his name, though it was his own baptismal name. Certain it is, that none of the bishops of that see ever assumed St. Peter's name, and some who have had it as their Christian name before, have laid it aside upon their election to the papacy. But to return to our apostle.

IV. His father was Jonah, probably a fisherman of Bethsaida, for the sacred story takes no further notice of him, than by the bare mention of his name; and I believe there had been no great danger of mistake, though Metaphrastes had not told us^l that it was not Jonas the prophet, who came out of the belly of the whale. Brother he was to St. Andrew the apostle, and some question there is amongst the ancients which was the elder brother. Epiphanius (probably from some tradition current in his time) clearly adjudges it to St. Andrew,^m herein universally followed by those of the church of Rome, that the precedency given to St. Peter may not seem to be put upon the account of his seniority. But to him we may oppose the authority of St. Chrysostom,ⁿ a person equal both in time and credit, who expressly says, that though Andrew came later into life than Peter, yet he first brought him to the knowledge of the gospel, which Baronius, against all pretence of reason, would understand of his entering into eternal life. Besides St. Hierom,^o Cassian,^p Bede,^q and others, are for St. Peter being elder brother, ex-

^k Sac. Cerem. Eccles. Rom. sect. 1. fol. 18.

^l Com. de Petr. et Paul. apud Sur. ad diem 29 Jun.

^m Hæres. li. c. 17.

ⁿ Serm. de S. Andr. quem recitat Metaphrast. ap. Sur. seu potius, Lippoman. vol. vi. vid. Baron. not. ad Martyrol. Novemb. 30. p. 737.

^o Hieron. lib. i. adv. Jovin. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 168.

^p Cassian. de Incarn. Dom. l. iii. c. 12.

^q Bed. Comment. in cap. i. Joan.

pressly ascribing it to his age, that he, rather than any other, was president of the college of the apostles. However it was, it sounds not a little to the honour of their father, (as of Zebedee also in the like case,) that of but twelve apostles two of his sons were taken into the number. In his youth he was brought up to fishing, which we may guess to have been the staple-trade of Bethsaida, (which hence, probably, borrowed its name, signifying an *house* or *habitation of fishing*, though others render it by *hunting*, the word בִּית דִּשְׁיָא equally being either,) much advantaged herein by the neighbourhood of the Lake of Gennesareth, (on whose banks it stood,) called also the Sea of Galilee, and the Sea of Tiberias, according to the mode of the Hebrew language, wherein all great confluences of waters are called seas. Of this lake the Jews have a saying,¹ that “of all the seven seas which God created, he made choice of none but the Sea of Gennesareth: which however intended by them, is true only in this respect, that our blessed Saviour made choice of it, to honour it with the frequency of his presence, and the power of his miraculous operations. In length it was an hundred furlongs, and about forty over;² the water of it pure and clear, sweet and most fit to drink; stored it was with several sorts of fish, and those different both in kind and taste from those in other places. Here it was that Peter closely followed the exercise of his calling; from whence it seems he afterwards removed to Capernaum,³ (probably upon his marriage, at least frequently resided there,) for there we meet with his house, and there we find him paying tribute: a house over which, Nicephorus tells us,⁴ that Helen, the mother of Constantine, erected a beautiful church to the honour of St. Peter. This place was equally advantageous for the managery of his trade, standing upon the influx of Jordan into the Sea of Galilee, and where he might as well reap the fruits of an honest and industrious diligence. A mean, I confess, it was, and a more servile course of life, as which, besides the great pains and labour it required, exposed him to all the injuries of wind and weather, to the storms of the sea, the darkness and tempestuousness of the night, and all to make a very small return: an employment, whose restless troubles, constant

¹ Midr. Tillin. fol. 41. ap. Lightf. Cent. Chorograph. in Matth. c. 70. p. 131.

² Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. iii. c. 35.

³ Matth. viii. 14. xvii. 24.

⁴ Hist. Eccl. l. viii. c. 30.

hardships, frequent dangers, and amazing horrors, are (for the satisfaction of the learned reader) thus elegantly described by one whose poems may be justly styled golden verses, receiving from the emperor Antoninus a piece of gold for every verse.*

Τλησιπόνους δ' ἄλιεύσιν ἀτέκμαρτοι μὲν ἄεθλοι,
 Ἐλπίς δ' οὐ σταθερὴ σαίνει φρένας ἥūt' ὄνειρος.
 Οὐ γὰρ ἀκινήτου γαίης ὕπερ ἀθλεύουσιν·
 Ἀλλ' αἰεὶ κρυερῷ τε καὶ ἄσχετα μαργαίνοντι
 Ὅτ' ὀδῶσι συμφορέονται, δ' καὶ γαίηθεν ἰδέσθαι
 Δεῖμα φέρει, καὶ μῦνον ὑπ' ὄμμασι πειρήσασθαι.
 Δούρασι δ' ἐν βαιοῖσιν ἀελλάνων θεράποντες
 Πλαζόμενοι, καὶ θυμὸν ἐν οἴδασι αἰὲν ἔχοντες,
 Αἰεὶ μὲν νεφέλην ἰοιδέα παπταίνουσιν·
 Αἰεὶ δὲ τρομέουσι μελαινόμενον πόρον ἄλμης·
 Οὐδέ τι φοιταλέων ἀνέμων σκέπας, οὐδέ τιν' ὄμβρων
 Ἀλκήν· οὐ πυρὸς ἄλκαρ ὀπωρινοῖο φέρονται.

But meanness is no bar in God's way: the poor, if virtuous, are as dear to heaven as the wealthy and the honourable, equally alike to him, with whom "there is no respect of persons." Nay, our Lord seemed to cast a peculiar honour upon this profession, when afterwards calling him and some others of the same trade from catching of fish, to be (as he told them) "fishers of men."

V. And here we may justly reflect upon the wise and admirable methods of the Divine Providence, which, in planting and propagating the Christian religion in the world, made choice of such mean and unlikely instruments, that he should hide these things from the wise and prudent, and reveal them unto babes, men that had not been educated in the academy and the schools of learning, but brought up to a trade, to catch fish and mend nets; most of the apostles being taken from the meanest trades, and all of them (St. Paul excepted) unfurnished of all arts of learning, and the advantages of liberal and ingenuous education: and yet these were the men that were designed to run down the world, and to overturn the learning of the prudent. Certainly had human wisdom been to manage the business, it would have taken quite other measures, and chosen out the profoundest rabbins, the acutest philosophers, the smoothest orators; such as would have been most likely, by strength of reason and arts

* Oppian. Ἀλιευτ. Βιβλ. α'. non longe ab init.

of rhetoric, to have triumphed over the minds of men, to grapple with the stubbornness of the Jews, and baffle the finer notions and speculations of the Greeks. We find that those sects of philosophy that gained most credit in the heathen world, did it this way, by their eminency in some arts and sciences, whereby they recommended themselves to the acceptance of the wiser and more ingenious part of mankind. Julian the Apostate thinks it a reasonable exception against the Jewish prophets,^y that they were incompetent messengers and interpreters of the divine will, because they had not their minds cleared and purged, by passing through the circle of polite arts and learning. Why, now, this is the wonder of it, that the first preachers of the gospel should be such rude unlearned men, and yet so suddenly, so powerfully prevail over the learned world, and conquer so many, who had the greatest parts and abilities, and the strongest prejudices against it, to the simplicity of the gospel. When Celsus objected that the apostles were but a company of mean and illiterate persons, sorry mariners and fishermen, Origen quickly returns upon him with this answer:^z "That hence it was plainly evident, that they taught Christianity by a divine power, when such persons were able, with such an uncontrolled success, to subdue men to the obedience of his word; for that they had no eloquent tongues, no subtle and discursive head, none of the refined and rhetorical arts of Greece, to conquer the minds of men." "For my part, (says he, in another place,^a) I verily believe that the holy Jesus purposely made use of such preachers of his doctrine, that there might be no suspicion that they came instructed with arts of sophistry; but that it might be clearly manifest to all the world, that there was no crafty design in it, and that they had a divine power going along with them, which was more efficacious than the greatest volubility of expression, or ornaments of speech, or the artifices which were used in the Grecian compositions." Had it not been for this divine power that upheld it, (as he elsewhere argues,^b) the Christian religion must needs have sunk under those weighty pressures that lay upon it; having not only to contend with the potent opposition of the senate, emperors, people, and the whole power of the Roman empire, but to conflict with those homebred wants and

^y Fragm. Epist. vol. i. p. 541.

^a Lib. iii. s. 39.

^z Contr. Cels. lib. i. s. 62.

^b Lib. i. s. 3.

necessities, wherewith its own professors were oppressed and burthened.

VI. It could not but greatly vindicate the apostles from all suspicion of forgery and imposture in the thoughts of sober and unbiassed persons, to see their doctrine readily entertained by men of the most discerning and inquisitive minds. Had they dealt only with the rude and the simple, the idiot and the unlearned, there might have been some pretence to suspect, that they lay in wait to deceive, and designed to impose upon the world by crafty and insinuating arts and methods. But, alas! they had other persons to deal with; men of the acutest wits and most profound abilities, the wisest philosophers, and most subtle disputants, able to weigh an argument with the greatest accuracy, and to decline the force of the strongest reasonings, and who had their parts edged with the keenest prejudices of education, and a mighty veneration for the religion of their country; a religion that for so many ages had governed the world, and taken firm possession of the minds of men. And yet, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, these plain men conquered the wise and the learned, and brought them over to that doctrine that was despised and scorned, opposed and persecuted, and that had nothing but its own native excellency to recommend it: a clear evidence that there was something in it beyond the craft and power of men. "Is not this (says an elegant apologist,^c making his address to the heathens) enough to make you believe and entertain it, to consider that in so short a time it has diffused itself over the whole world, civilized the most barbarous nations, softened the roughest and most intractable tempers; that the greatest wits and scholars, orators, grammarians, rhetoricians, lawyers, physicians, and philosophers, have quitted their formerly dear and beloved sentiments, and heartily embraced the precepts and doctrines of the gospel?" Upon this account Theodoret does with no less truth than elegance insult and triumph over the heathens:^d he tells them, that whoever would be at the pains to compare the best law-makers, either among the Greeks or Romans, with our fishermen and publicans, would soon perceive what a divine virtue and efficacy there was in them above all others, whereby they did not only conquer their neighbours, not

^c Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. ii. p. 21.

^d De Curand. Græc. Affect. Sermon. ix. de Leg.

only the Greeks and Romans, but brought over the most barbarous nations to a compliance with the laws of the gospel; and that, not by force of arms, not by numerous bands of soldiers,^e not by methods of torture and cruelty, but by meek persuasives, and a convincing the world of the excellency and usefulness of those laws which they propounded to them: a thing which the wisest and best men of the heathen world could never do, to make their *dogmata* and institutions universally obtain; nay, that Plato himself could never, by all his plausible and insinuating arts, make his laws to be entertained by his own dear Athenians.^f He farther shews them,^g that the laws published by our fishermen and tent-makers could never be abolished (like those made by the best amongst them) by the policies of Caius, the power of Claudius, the cruelties of Nero, or any of the succeeding emperors; but still they went on conquering and to conquer, and made millions, both of men and women, willing to embrace flames, and to encounter death in its most horrid shapes, rather than disown and forsake them:^h whereof he calls to witness those many churches and monuments every where erected to the memory of Christian martyrs, no less to the honour than advantage of those cities and countries, and in some sense to all mankind.

VII. The sum of the discourse is, in the apostle's words,ⁱ that "God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; the weak to confound those that are mighty; the base things of the world, things most vilified and despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are." These were the things, these the persons, whom God sent upon this errand, to silence the "wise, the scribe, and the disputer of this world; and to make foolish the wisdom of this world."^k For though "the Jews required a sign, and the Greeks sought after wisdom, though the preaching a crucified Saviour was a scandal to the Jews, and foolishness to the (learned) Grecians, yet by this foolishness of preaching God was pleased to save them that believed:" and in the event made it appear that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men." That so the honour of all might entirely redound

^e De Curand. Græc. Affect. Serm. ix. de Leg. p. 125.

^f Ibid. p. 128.

^g Ibid. p. 126.

^h Ibid. p. 135.

ⁱ 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.

^k 1 Cor. i. 22, 23, 24.

to himself, so the apostle concludes, "that no flesh should glory in his presence, but that he that glorieth, should glory in the Lord."¹

SECTION II.

OF ST. PETER, FROM HIS FIRST COMING TO CHRIST TILL HIS BEING CALLED TO BE A DISCIPLE.

Peter, before his coming to Christ, a disciple (probably) of John the Baptist. His first approaches to Christ. Our Lord's communication with him. His return to his trade. Christ's entering into Peter's ship, and preaching to the people at the Sea of Galilee. The miraculous draught of fishes. Peter's great astonishment at this evidence of our Lord's divinity. His call to be a disciple. Christ's return to Capernaum, and healing Peter's mother-in-law.

THOUGH we find not whether Peter, before his coming to Christ, was engaged in any of the particular sects at this time in the Jewish church, yet it is greatly probable, that he was one of the disciples of John the Baptist. For, first, it is certain that his brother Andrew was so, and we can hardly think these two brothers should draw contrary ways, or that he, who was so ready to bring his brother the early tidings of the Messiah, that the "Sun of righteousness" was already risen in those parts, should not be as solicitous to bring him under the discipline and influences of John the Baptist, the day-star that went before him. Secondly, Peter's forwardness and curiosity at the first news of Christ's appearing, to come to him, and converse with him, shew that his expectations had been awakened, and some light in this matter conveyed to him by the preaching and ministry of John, who was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," shewing them who it was that was coming after him.

II. His first acquaintance with Christ commenced in this manner. The blessed Jesus having for thirty years passed through the solitudes of a private life, had lately been baptized in Jordan, and there publicly owned to be the Son of God, by the most solemn attestations that heaven could give him ;

¹ Isti primi vocati sunt, ut Dominum sequerentur : piscatores et illiterati mittuntur ad prædicandum, ne fides credentium non virtute Dei, sed eloquentia atque doctrina fieri putarentur. Hieron. comm. in Matt. c. iv.

whereupon he was immediately hurried into the wilderness to a personal contest with the devil for forty days together. So natural is it to the enemy of mankind to malign our happiness, and to seek to blast our joys, when we are under the highest instances of the divine grace and favour. His enemy being conquered in three set battles, and fled, he returned hence, and came down to Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing his proselytes, and endeavouring to satisfy the Jews, who had sent to him curiously to inquire concerning this new Messiah that appeared among them. Upon the great testimony which the Baptist gave him, and his pointing to our Lord then passing by him,^a two of John's disciples, who were then with him, presently followed after Christ, one of which was Andrew, Simon's brother. It was towards evening when they came, and therefore, probably, they stayed with him all night, during which Andrew had opportunity to inform himself, and to satisfy his most scrupulous inquiries. Early the next morning (if not that very evening) he hastened to acquaint his brother Simon with these glad tidings. It is not enough to be good and happy alone; religion is a communicative principle, that, like the circles in the water, delights to multiply itself, and to diffuse its influences round about it, and especially upon those whom nature has placed nearest to us.^b He tells him, they had found the long-looked-for Messiah, him whom Moses and the prophets had so signally foretold, and whom all the devout and pious of that nation had so long expected.

III. Simon, (one of those who "looked for the kingdom of God," and "waited for the redemption of Israel,") ravished with this joyful news, and impatient of delay, presently follows his brother to the place: whither he was no sooner come, but our Lord, to give him an evidence of his divinity,^c salutes him at first sight by name, tells him what and who he was both as to his name and kindred, what title should be given him, that he should be called Cephas, or Peter; a name which he afterwards actually conferred upon him. What passed farther between them, and whether these two brothers henceforward personally attended our Saviour's motions in the number of his disciples,

^a John i. 37.

^b Vid. Comm. de S. Andr. in Menæis Græcor. ἡμέρ. λ'. Νοεμβρ. sub. lit. π'.

^c John i. 42.

the sacred story leaves us in the dark. It seems probable, that they stayed with him for some time, till they were instructed in the first rudiments of his doctrine, and by his leave departed home. For it is reasonable to suppose, that our Lord being unwilling, at this time especially, to awaken the jealousies of the state by a numerous retinue, might dismiss his disciples for some time, and Peter and Andrew amongst the rest, who hereupon returned home to the exercise of their calling, where he found them afterwards.

IV. It was now somewhat more than a year since our Lord, having entered upon the public stage of action, constantly "went about doing good, healing the sick, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom,"ⁿ residing usually at Capernaum, and the parts about it; where, by the constancy of his preaching and the reputation of his miracles, his fame spread about all those countries, by means whereof multitudes of people from all parts flocked to him, greedily desirous to become his auditors. And what wonder if the parched and barren earth thirsted for the showers of heaven? It happened that our Lord retiring out of the city, to enjoy the privacies of contemplation upon the banks of the Sea of Galilee, it was not long before the multitude found him out; to avoid the crowd and press whereof he stepped into a ship, or fisher-boat,^o that lay near to the shore, which belonged to Peter, who together with his companions, after a tedious and unsuccessful night, were gone ashore to wash and dry their nets. He, who might have commanded, was yet pleased to entreat Peter (who by this time was returned into his ship) to put a little from the shore. Here being sat, he taught the people, who stood along upon the shore to hear him. Sermon ended, he resolved to seal up his doctrine with a miracle, that the people might be the more effectually convinced, that "he was a teacher come from God." To this purpose, he bade Simon launch out farther, and cast his net into the sea: Simon tells him, they had done it already; that they had been fishing all the last night, but in vain; and if they could not succeed then, (the most proper season for that employment,) there was less hope to speed now, it being probably about noon. But because where God commands, it is not for any to argue, but obey; at our Lord's instance he let down the net, which immediately inclosed

ⁿ Matth. iv. 23.

^o Luke v. 1.

so great a multitude of fishes, that the net began to break, and they were forced to call to their partners, who were in a ship hard by them, to come in to their assistance. A draught so great, that it loaded both their boats, and that so full, that it endangered their sinking before they could get safe to shore: an instance wherein our Saviour gave an ocular demonstration that, as Messiah, God had "put all things under his feet, not only fowls of the air, but the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passed through the paths of the seas."^p

V. Amazed they were all at this miraculous draught of fishes, whereupon Simon, in an ecstasy of admiration, and a mixture of humility and fear, threw himself at the feet of Christ, and prayed him to depart from him, as a vile and a sinful person. So evident were the appearances of divinity in this miracle, that he was overpowered and dazzled with its brightness and lustre, and reflecting upon himself, could not but think himself unworthy the presence of so great a person, so immediately sent from God; and considering his own state, (conscience being hereby more sensibly awakened,) was afraid that the divine vengeance might pursue and overtake him. But our Lord, to abate the edge of his fears, assures him that this miracle was not done to amaze and terrify him, but to strengthen and confirm his faith; that now he had nobler work and employment for him; instead of "catching fish," he should, by persuading men to the obedience of the gospel, "catch the souls of men:" and accordingly commanded him and his brother to follow him, (the same command which presently after he gave to the two sons of Zebedee.) The word was no sooner spoken, and they landed, but disposing their concerns in the hands of friends, (as we may presume prudent and reasonable men would,) they immediately left all, and followed him; and from this time Peter and the rest became his constant and inseparable disciples, living under the rules of his discipline and institutions.

VI. From hence they returned to Capernaum, where our Lord entering into Simon's house (the place, in all likelihood, where he was wont to lodge during his residence in that city,) found his mother-in-law visited with a violent fever.^q No privileges afford an exemption from the ordinary laws of human nature; Christ, under her roof, did not protect this woman from

^p Ps. viii. 6, 7, 8.

^q Matt. viii. 14. Mark i. 29. Luke iv. 38. John xi. 3.

the assaults and invasions of a fever. "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick," as they said concerning Lazarus. Here a fresh opportunity offered itself to Christ of exerting his divine power. No sooner was he told of it, but he came to her bedside, rebuked the paroxisms, commanded the fever to be gone, and, taking her by the hand to lift her up, in a moment restored her to perfect health, and ability to return to the business of her family, all cures being equally easy to Omnipotence.

SECTION III.

OF ST. PETER, FROM HIS ELECTION TO THE APOSTOLATE TILL THE
CONFESSION WHICH HE MADE OF CHRIST.

The election of the apostles ; and our Lord's solemn preparation for it. The powers and commission given to them. Why twelve chosen. Peter the first in order, not power. The apostles, when and by whom baptized. The tradition of Euodius, of Peter's being immediately baptized by Christ, rejected, and its authorities proved insufficient. Three of the apostles more intimately conversant with our Saviour. Peter's being with Christ at the raising Jairus's daughter. His walking with Christ upon the sea. The creatures at God's command act contrary to their natural inclinations. The weakness of Peter's faith. Christ's power in commanding down the storm, an evidence of his divinity. Many disciples desert our Saviour's preaching. Peter's profession of constancy in the name of the rest of the apostles.

OUR Lord being now to elect some peculiar persons, as his immediate vicegerents upon earth, to whose care and trust he might commit the building up of his church, and the planting that religion in the world for which he himself came down from heaven ; in order to it he privately over-night withdrew himself into a solitary mountain,* (commonly called "the mount of Christ," from his frequent repairing thither, though some of the ancients will have it to be mount Tabor,) there to make his solemn address to heaven for a prosperous success on so great a work. Herein leaving an excellent copy and precedent to the governors of his church, how to proceed in setting apart persons to so weighty and difficult an employment. Upon this mountain we may conceive there was an oratory, or place of prayer, (probably intimated by St. Luke's ἡ προσευχή, for such *proseuchas*, or houses of prayer, usually uncovered, and standing in the fields,

* Luke vi. 12.

the Jews had in several places,) wherein our Lord continued all night, not in one continued and entire act of devotion, but probably by intervals and repeated returns of duty.

II. Early the next morning his disciples came to him, out of whom he made choice of twelve to be his apostles,^a that they might be the constant attendants upon his person, to hear his discourses, and be eyewitnesses of his miracles; to be always conversant with him while he was upon earth, and afterwards to be sent abroad up and down the world, to carry on that work which he himself had begun; whom therefore he invested with the power of working miracles, which was more completely conferred upon them after his ascension into heaven. Passing by the several fancies and conjectures of the ancients, why our Saviour pitched upon the just number of twelve, (whereof before,) it may deserve to be considered, whether our Lord being now to appoint the supreme officers and governors of his church, which the apostle styles, the "commonwealth of Israel,"^b might not herein have a more peculiar allusion to the twelve patriarchs, as founders of their several tribes, or to the constant heads and rulers of those twelve tribes of which the body of the Jewish nation did consist: especially since he himself seems elsewhere to give countenance to it, when he tells the apostles, that "when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory," that is, be gone back to heaven, and have taken full possession of his evangelical kingdom, which principally commenced from his resurrection, that then "they also should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," that is, they should have great powers and authorities in the church, such as the power of the keys, and other rights of spiritual judicature and sovereignty, answerable in some proportion to the power and dignity which the heads and rulers of the twelve tribes of Israel did enjoy.

III. In the enumeration of these twelve apostles, all the evangelists constantly place St. Peter in the front; and St. Matthew expressly tells us,^c that he was the first, that is, he was the first that was called to be an apostle: his age also, and the gravity of his person, more particularly qualifying him for a primacy of order amongst the rest of the apostles, as that without which no society of men can be managed or maintained. Less

^a Matt. x. 1. Mark iii. 14. Luke vi. 13.

^b Matt. xix. 28.

^c Ephes. ii. 12.

^d Matt. x. 2.

than this, as none will deny him, so more than this, neither scripture nor primitive antiquity do allow him. And now it was that our Lord actually conferred that name upon him, which before he had promised him; "Simon he surnamed Peter."^y It may here be inquired, when and by whom the apostles were baptized. That they were is unquestionable, being themselves appointed to confer it upon others; but when, or how, the scripture is altogether silent. Nicephorus,^z from no worse an author, as he pretends, than Euodius, St. Peter's immediate successor in the see of Antioch, tells us, that of all the apostles Christ baptized none but Peter with his own hands; that Peter baptized Andrew and the two sons of Zebedee, and they the rest of the apostles. This, if so, would greatly make for the honour of St. Peter; but, alas, his authority is not only suspicious, but supposititious, in a manner deserted by St. Peter's best friends, and the strongest champions of his cause; Baronius himself, however sometimes willing to make use of him,^a elsewhere confessing,^b that this epistle of Euodius is altogether unknown to any of the ancients. As for the testimony of Clemens Alexandrinus, which to the same purpose he quotes out of Sophronius,^c (though not Sophronius, but Johannes Moschus, as is notoriously known, is the author of that book,) besides that it is delivered upon an uncertain report, pretended to have been alleged in a discourse between one Dionysius, bishop of Ascalon, and his clergy, out of a book of Clemens, not now extant; his authors are much alike, that is, of no great value and authority.

IV. Amongst these apostles our Lord chose a triumvirate, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, to be his more intimate companions, whom he admitted more familiarly than the rest unto all the more secret passages and transactions of his life; the first instance of which was on this occasion:^d Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, had a daughter desperately sick, whose disease having baffled all the arts of physic, was only curable by the immediate agency of the God of nature. He therefore, in all humility, addresses himself to our Saviour; which he had no sooner done, but servants came post to tell him, that

^y Mark iii. 16.

^a Ad Ann. 31. num. 40.

^c Vid. Jos. Moschi Prat. Spir. cap. 176. Bibl. patr. Gr. Lat. vol. ii. p. 1133. ed. 1624.

^d Mark v. 22.

^z Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 3.

^b Ad Ann. 71. num. 13.

it was in vain to trouble our Lord, for that his daughter was dead. Christ bids him not despond; if his faith held out, there was no danger: and suffering none to follow him but Peter, James, and John, goes along with him to the house, where he was derided by the sorrowful friends and neighbours, for telling them that she was not perfectly dead: but our Lord entering in, with the commanding efficacy of two words, restored her at once both to life and perfect health.

V. Our Lord after this preached many sermons, and wrought many miracles; amongst which, none more remarkable than his feeding a multitude of five thousand men,* besides women and children, with but five loaves and two fishes; of which, nevertheless, twelve baskets of fragments were taken up: which being done, and the multitude dismissed, he commanded the apostles to take ship, it being now near night, and to cross over to Capernaum, whilst he himself, as his manner was, retired to a neighbouring mountain to dispose himself to prayer and contemplation. The apostles were scarce got into the middle of the sea, when on a sudden a violent storm and tempest began to arise, whereby they were brought into present danger of their lives. Our Saviour, who knew how the case stood with them, and how much they laboured under infinite pains and fears, having himself caused this tempest for the greater trial of their faith, a little before morning (for so long they remained in this imminent danger) immediately conveyed himself upon the sea, where the waves received him, being proud to carry their master. He who refused to gratify the devil, when tempting him to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, did here commit himself to a boisterous and unstable element, and that in a violent storm, walking upon the water as if it had been dry ground. But that infinite power that made and supports the world, as it gave rules to all particular beings, so can, when it pleaseth, countermand the laws of their creation, and make them act contrary to their natural inclinations. If God say the word, the sun will stand still in the middle of the heavens; if, Go back, it will retrocede, as upon the dial of Ahaz: if he command it, the heavens will become as brass, and the earth as iron, and that for three years and a half together, as in the case of Elijah's prayer; if he say to the sea, Divide, it will run upon heaps, and

* Matt. xiv. 17.

become on both sides as firm as a wall of marble. Nothing can be more natural than for the fire to burn, and yet at God's command it will forget its nature, and become a screen and a fence to the three children in the Babylonian furnace. What heavier than iron, or more natural than for gravity to tend downwards? and yet, when God will have it, iron shall float like cork on the top of the water. The proud and raging sea, that naturally refuses to bear the bodies of men while alive, became here as firm as brass when commanded to wait upon and do homage to the God of nature. Our Lord walking towards the ship, as if he had an intention to pass by it, was espied by them, who presently thought it to be the apparition of a spirit. Hereupon they were seized with great terror and consternation, and their fears, in all likelihood, heightened by the vulgar opinion, that they are evil spirits that choose rather to appear in the night than by day. While they were in this agony, our Lord, taking compassion on them, calls to them, and bids them not be afraid, for that it was no other than he himself. Peter (the eagerness of whose temper carried him forward to all bold and resolute undertakings) entreated our Lord, that if it was he, he might have leave to come upon the water to him. Having received his orders, he went out of the ship, and walked upon the sea to meet his master; but when he found the wind to bear hard against him, and the waves to rise round about him, whereby, probably, the sight of Christ was intercepted, he began to be afraid; and the higher his fears arose, the lower his faith began to sink, and, together with that, his body began to sink under water: whereupon, in a passionate fright, he cried out to our Lord to help him, who, reaching out his arm, took him by the hand, and set him again upon the top of the water, with this gentle reproof, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" it being the weakness of our faith that makes the influences of the divine power and goodness to have no better effect upon us. Being come to the ship, they took them in, where our Lord no sooner arrived, but the winds and waves, observing their duty to their sovereign Lord, and having done the errand which they came upon, mannerly departed, and vanished away, and the ship in an instant was at the shore. All that were in the ship being strangely astonished at this miracle, and fully convinced of the divinity of his person, came

and did homage to him, with this confession, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God:" after which they went ashore, and landed in the country of Gennesareth, and there more fully acknowledged him before all the people.

VI. The next day, great multitudes flocking after him, he entered into a synagogue at Capernaum,^f and taking occasion from the late miracle of the loaves, which he had wrought amongst them, he began to discourse concerning himself as the "true manna," and the "bread that came down from heaven;" largely opening to them many of the more sublime and spiritual mysteries, and the necessary and important duties of the gospel. Hereupon a great part of his auditory, who had hitherto followed him, finding their understandings gruelled with these difficult and uncommon notions, and that the duties he required were likely to grate hard upon them, and perceiving now that he was not the Messiah they took him for, whose kingdom should consist in an external grandeur and plenty, but was to be managed and transacted in a more inward and spiritual way, hereupon fairly left him in open field, and henceforth quite turned their backs upon him. Whereupon our Lord, turning about to his apostles, asked them, whether "they also would go away from him?" Peter (spokesman generally for all the rest) answered, Whither should they go to mend and better their condition? should they return back to Moses? Alas! he "laid a yoke upon them, which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear." Should they go to the Scribes and Pharisees? they would feed them with stones instead of bread, obtrude human traditions upon them for divine dictates and commands. Should they betake themselves to the philosophers amongst the Gentiles? they were miserably blind and short-sighted in their notions of things, and their sentiments and opinions not only different from, but contrary to one another. No, it was "he only had the words of eternal life," whose doctrine could instruct them in the plain way to heaven; that they had fully assented to what both John and he had said concerning himself; that they were fully persuaded, both from the efficacy of his sermons, which they had heard, and the powerful conviction of his miracles, which they had seen, that he was "the Son of the living God," the true Messiah and Saviour of the world. But notwithstanding this fair and plausible testi-

^f John vi. 24.

mony, he tells them, that they were not all of this mind; that there was a Satan amongst them, one that was moved by the spirit and impulse, and that acted according to the rules and interest of the devil; intimating Judas who should betray him. So hard is it to meet with a body of so just and pure a constitution, wherein some rotten member or distempered part is not to be found.

SECTION IV.

OF ST. PETER, FROM THE TIME OF HIS CONFESSION TILL OUR LORD'S LAST PASSOVER.

Our Saviour's journey with his apostles to Cæsarea. The opinions of the people concerning him. Peter's eminent confession of Christ, and our Lord's great commendation of it. "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock," &c. The keys of the kingdom of heaven, how given. The advantage the church of Rome makes of these passages. This confession made by Peter in the name of the rest, and by others before him. No personal privilege intended to St. Peter: the same things elsewhere promised to the other apostles. Our Lord's discourse concerning his passion. Peter's unseasonable zeal in dissuading him from it, and our Lord's severe rebuking him. Christ's transfiguration, and the glory of it: Peter, how affected with it. Peter's paying tribute for Christ and himself. This tribute, what. Our Saviour's discourse upon it. Offending brethren, how oft to be forgiven. The young man commanded to sell all. What compensation made to the followers of Christ. Our Lord's triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. Preparation made to keep the passover.

It was some time since our Saviour had kept his third passover at Jerusalem, when he directed his journey towards Cæsarea Philippi; * where, by the way, having like a careful master of his family first prayed with his apostles, he began to ask them (having been more than two years publicly conversant amongst them) what the world thought concerning him? They answered, that the opinions of men about him were various and different; that some took him for John the Baptist, lately risen from the dead, between whose doctrine, discipline, and way of life, in the main, there was so great a correspondence. That others thought he was Elias; probably judging so from the gravity of his person, freedom of his preaching, the fame and reputation of his miracles, especially since the scriptures assured them he was not dead, but taken up into heaven; and had so expressly foretold that he

* Mark viii. 27. Matt. xvi. 21. Luke ix. 18.

should return back again. That others looked upon him as the prophet Jeremiah alive again, of whose return the Jews had great expectations, insomuch that some of them thought the soul of Jeremiah was reinspired into Zacharias. Or if not thus, at least that he was one of the more eminent of the ancient prophets, or that the souls of some of these persons had been breathed into him; the doctrine of the *μετεμψύχωσις*, or “transmigration of souls,” first broached and propagated by Pythagoras, being at this time current amongst the Jews, and owned by the Pharisees as one of their prime notions and principles.

II. This account not sufficing, our Lord comes closer and nearer to them; tells them, it was no wonder if the common people were divided into these wild thoughts concerning him; but since they had been always with him, had been hearers of his sermons, and spectators of his miracles, he inquired, what they themselves thought of him? Peter, ever forward to return an answer, and therefore by the fathers frequently styled, “the mouth of the apostles,”^h told him, in the name of the rest, that he was the Messiah, “the Son of the living God,” promised of old in the law and the prophets, heartily desired and looked for by all good men, anointed and set apart by God to be the King, Priest, and Prophet of his people. To this excellent and comprehensive confession of St. Peter’s, our Lord returns this great eulogy and commendation: “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah, flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” That is, this faith which thou hast now confessed, is not human, contrived by man’s wit, or built upon his testimony, but upon those notions and principles which I was sent by God to reveal to the world, and those mighty and solemn attestations which he has given from heaven to the truth both of my person and my doctrine. And because thou hast so freely made this confession, therefore “I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” That is, that as thy name signifies a *stone* or *rock*, such shalt thou thyself be; firm, solid, and immovable, in building of the church, which shall be so orderly erected by thy care and diligence, and so firmly founded upon

^h Τὸ στόμα τῶν ἀποστόλων ὁ Πέτρος, ὁ πανταχοῦ θερμὸς, ὁ τοῦ χοροῦ τῶν ἀποστόλων κορυφαῖος, πάντων ἐρωτηθέντων, αὐτὸς ἀποκρίνεται. Chrysost. in Matt. Hom. liv. (al. lv.) s. l. vol. vii. p. 546.

that faith which thou hast now confessed, that all the assaults and attempts which the powers of hell can make against it, shall not be able to overturn it. Moreover, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." That is, thou shalt have that spiritual authority and power within the church, whereby, as with keys, thou shalt be able to shut and lock out obstinate and impenitent sinners, and upon their repentance to unlock the door, and take them in again: and what thou shalt thus regularly do, shall be owned in the court above, and ratified by God in heaven.

III. Upon these several passages, the champions of the church of Rome mainly build the unlimited supremacy and infallibility of the bishops of that see; with how much truth, and how little reason, it is not my present purpose to discuss. It may suffice here to remark, that though this place does very much tend to exalt the honour of St. Peter, yet is there nothing herein personal and peculiar to him alone, as distinct from, and preferred above the rest of the apostles. Does he here make confession of Christ's being "the Son of God?" Yet, besides that herein he spake but the sense of all the rest, this was no more than what others had said as well as he, yea, before he was so much as called to be a disciple. Thus Nathanael, at his first coming to Christ, expressly told him, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel."ⁱ Does our Lord here style him a "rock?" All the apostles are elsewhere equally called "foundations," yea, said to be the "twelve foundations upon which the wall of the new Jerusalem," that is, the evangelical church, is erected;^k and sometimes others of them besides Peter are called "pillars," as they have relation to the church already built. Does Christ here promise the "keys" to Peter? that is, power of governing, and of exercising church-censures, and of absolving penitent sinners? The very same is elsewhere promised to all the apostles, and almost in the very same terms and words. "If thine offending brother prove obstinate, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee an heathen and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be

ⁱ John i. 49.

^k Rev. xxi. 14. Eph. ii. 20. Gal. ii. 9.

bound in heaven ; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”¹ And elsewhere, when ready to leave the world, he tells them, “ As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you : whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.”^m By all which it is evident, that our Lord did not here give any personal prerogative to St. Peter, as universal pastor and head of the Christian church, much less to those who were to be his successors in the see of Rome ; but that as he made his confession in the name of the rest of the apostles, so what was here promised unto him, was equally intended unto all. Nor did the more considering and judicious part of the fathers (however giving a mighty reverence to St. Peter) ever understand it in any other sense. Sure I am that Origen tells us,ⁿ that every true Christian that makes this confession with the same spirit and integrity which St. Peter did, shall have the same blessing and commendation from Christ conferred upon him.

IV. The Holy Jesus, knowing the time of his passion to draw on, began to prepare the minds of his apostles against that fatal hour ;^o telling them what hard and bitter things he should suffer at Jerusalem, what affronts and indignities he must undergo, and be at last put to death with all the arts of torture and disgrace, by the decree of the Jewish Sanhedrim. Peter, whom our Lord had infinitely encouraged and endeared to him, by the great things which he had lately said concerning him, so that his spirits were now afloat, and his passions ready to overrun the banks, not able to endure a thought that so much evil should befall his master, broke out into an over-confident and unseasonable interruption of him : “ He took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee.” Besides his great kindness and affection to his Master, the minds of the apostles were not yet thoroughly purged from the hopes and expectations of a glorious reign of the Messiah, so that Peter could not but look upon these sufferings as unbecoming and inconsistent with the state and dignity of the Son of God ; and therefore thought good to advise his Lord, to take care of himself, and, while there was time, to prevent and avoid them. This, our Lord, who valued the re-

¹ Matt. xviii. 17, 18.

^m John xx. 21—23.

ⁿ Comment. in loc.

^o Matt. xvi. 21. Mark viii. 31. Luke ix. 22.

demption of mankind infinitely before his own ease and safety, resented at so high a rate, that he returned upon him with this tart and stinging reproof, "Get thee behind me, Satan;" the very same treatment which he gave once to the devil himself, when he made that insolent proposal to him, "to fall down and worship him:"^p though in Satan it was the result of pure malice and hatred; in Peter, only an error of love and great regard. However, our Lord could not but look upon it as a mischievous and diabolical counsel, prompted and promoted by the great adversary of mankind. Away therefore, says Christ, with thy hellish and pernicious counsel, "thou art an offence unto me;" in seeking to oppose and undermine that great design, for which I purposely came down from heaven: in this "thou savourest not the things of God, but those that be of men," in suggesting to me those little shifts and arts of safety and self-preservation which human prudence, and the love of men's own selves, are wont to dictate to them: by which, though we may learn Peter's mighty kindness to our Saviour, yet that herein he did not take his measures right; a plain evidence that his infallibility had not yet taken place.

V. About a week after this,^q our Saviour being to receive a type and specimen of his future glorification, took with him his three more intimate apostles, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and went up into a very high mountain, which the ancients generally conceive to have been mount Tabor, a round and very high mountain, situate in the plains of Galilee. And now was even literally fulfilled what the Psalmist had spoken, "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name:"^r for what greater joy and triumph, than to be peculiarly chosen to be the holy mount, whereon our Lord in so eminent a manner "received from God the Father honour and glory," and made such magnificent displays of his divine power and majesty? For while they were here earnestly employed in prayer, (as seldom did our Lord enter upon any eminent action but he first made his address to heaven,) he was suddenly transformed into another manner of appearance; such a lustre and radiancy darted from his face, that the sun itself shines not brighter at noon-day; such beams of light reflected from his garments, as outdid the light itself that was round about them, so exceeding pure and white, that

^p Luke iv. 8. ^q Matt. xvii. 1. Mark ix. 2. Luke ix. 28. ^r Ps. lxxxix. 12.

the snow might blush to compare with it ; nor could the fuller's art purify any thing into half that whiteness ; an evident and sensible representation of the glory of that state, wherein the "just shall walk in white, and shine as the sun in the kingdom of the Father." During this heavenly scene, there appeared Moses and Elias, (who, as the Jews say, shall come together,) clothed with all the brightness and majesty of a glorified state, familiarly conversing with him, and discoursing of the death and sufferings which he was shortly to undergo, and his departure into heaven. Behold here together the three greatest persons that ever were the ministers of heaven : Moses, under God, the institutor and promulgator of the law ; Elias, the great reformer of it, when under its deepest degeneracy and corruption ; and the blessed Jesus, the Son of God, who came to take away what was weak and imperfect, and to introduce a more manly and rational institution, and to communicate the last revelation which God would make of his mind to the world. Peter and the two apostles that were with him, were in the mean time fallen asleep, heavy through want of natural rest, (it being probably night when this was done,) or else overpowered with these extraordinary appearances, which the frailty and weakness of their present state could not bear, were fallen into a trance : but now awaking, were strangely surprised to behold our Lord surrounded with so much glory, and those two great persons conversing with him ; knowing who they were, probably, by some particular marks and signatures that were upon them, or else by immediate revelation, or from the discourse which passed betwixt Christ and them, or possibly from some communication which they themselves might have with them. While these heavenly guests were about to depart, Peter, in a great rapture and ecstasy of mind, addressed himself to our Saviour, telling him how infinitely they were pleased and delighted with their being there ; and to that purpose desiring his leave, that they might erect three tabernacles, one for Him, one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he was thus saying, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed the two great ministers, and wrapped them up ; out of which came a voice, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him : " which when the apostles heard, and saw the cloud coming over themselves, they were seized with a great consternation, and fell upon their faces to

the ground, whom our Lord gently touched, bade them arise, and disband their fears: whereupon looking up, they saw none but their Master, the rest having vanished and disappeared. In memory of these great transactions, Bede tells us,^a that in pursuance of St. Peter's petition about the three tabernacles, there were afterwards three churches built upon the top of this mountain, which in after-times were had in great veneration, which might possibly give some foundation to that report which one makes,^t that in his time there were shewed the ruins of those three tabernacles which were built according to St. Peter's desire.

VI. After this, our Lord and his apostles, having travelled through Galilee, the gatherers of the tribute-money came to Peter, and asked him,^u whether his master was not obliged to pay the tribute which God, under the Mosaic law, commanded to be yearly paid by every Jew above twenty years old, to the use of the temple, which so continued to the times of Vespasian, under whom the temple being destroyed, it was by him transferred to the use of the capitol at Rome, being to the value of half a shekel, or fifteen pence of our money. To this question of theirs, Peter positively answers, Yes; knowing his Master would never be backward, either to "give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, or to God the things that are God's." Peter going into the house to give an account to his Master, and to know his mind concerning it, Christ prevented him with this question, "What thinkest thou, Simon, of whom do earthly kings exact tribute," of their own children and family, or from other people? Peter answered, Not from their own servants and family, but from strangers. To which our Lord presently replied, that then, according to his own argument and opinion, both he himself, as being the Son of God, and they whom he had taken to be his menial and domestic servants, were free from this tax of head-money, yearly to be paid to God. But rather than give offence, by seeming to despise the temple, and to undervalue that authority that had settled this tribute, he resolves to put himself to the expense and charges of a miracle, and therefore commanded Peter to go to the sea, and take up the first fish which came to his hook, in whose mouth he

^a De Loc. Sanct. c. 17.

^t Bern. à Bridenb. Itiner. Terræ Sanct. Vid. J. Cotovic. Itin. l. iii. c. 7.

^u Matt. xvii. 24.

should find a piece of money, (a stater, in value a shekel, or half a crown,) which he took, and gave to the collectors, both for his master and himself.

VII. Our Lord, after this, discoursing to them, how to carry themselves towards their offending brethren, Peter,^{*} being desirous to be more particularly informed in this matter, asked our Saviour, how oft a man was obliged to forgive his brother, in case of offence and trespass, whether seven times was not enough? He told him, that upon his neighbour's repentance, he was not only bound to do it "seven times," but "until seventy times seven;" that is, he must be indulgent to him, as oft as the offender returns and begs it, and heartily professes his sorrow and repentance: which he further illustrates by a plain and excellent parable, and thence draws this conclusion, that the same measures, either of compassion or cruelty, which men shew to their fellow brethren, they themselves shall meet with at the hands of God, the supreme ruler and justiciary of the world. It was not long after, when a brisk young man addressed himself to our Saviour, to know of him by what methods he might best attain eternal life.[†] Our Lord, to humble his confidence, bade him "sell his estate, and give it to the poor;" and, putting himself under his discipline, he should have a much better "treasure in heaven." The man was rich, and liked not the counsel, nor was he willing to purchase happiness at such a rate; and accordingly went away under great sorrow and discontent: upon which Christ takes occasion to let them know, how hardly those men would get to heaven, who built their comfort and happiness upon the plenty and abundance of these outward things. Peter, taking hold of this opportunity, asked, what return they themselves should make, who had quitted and renounced whatever they had for his sake and service? Our Saviour answers, that no man should be a loser by his service; that, for their parts, they should be recompenced with far greater privileges; and that whoever should forsake houses or lands, kindred and relations, out of love to him and his religion, should enjoy them again, with infinite advantages in this world, if consistent with the circumstances of their state, and those troubles and persecutions which would necessarily arise from the profession of the gospel: however, they should have what would

^{*} Matt. xviii. 21.

[†] Matt. xix. 16. Mark x. 17. Luke xviii. 18.

make infinite amends for all; "eternal life in the other world."

VIII. Our Saviour, in order to his last fatal journey to Jerusalem, that he might the better comply with the prophecy that went before of him, sent two of his apostles, who in all probability were Peter and John, with an authoritative commission to fetch him an ass to ride on,^a (he had none of his own; he, who "was rich, for our sakes made himself poor;" he lived upon charity all his life; had neither an ass to ride on, nor a house where to lay his head; no, nor after his death, a tomb to lie in, but what the charity of others provided for him,) whereon being mounted, and attended with the festivities of the people, he set forward in his journey; wherein there appears an admirable mixture of humility and majesty: the ass he rode on became the meanness and meekness of a prophet; but his arbitrary commission for the fetching it, and the ready obedience of its owners, spake the prerogative of a king: the palms borne before him, the garments strewed in his way, and the joyful hosannahs and acclamations of the people, proclaim at once both the majesty of a prince, and the triumph of a Saviour: for such expressions of joy we find were usual in public and festival solemnities; thus the historian,^a describing the emperor Commodus's triumphant return to Rome, tells us, that the senate and whole people of Rome, to testify their mighty kindness and veneration for him, came out of the city to meet him, *δαφνηφόροι τε καὶ πάντα ἐπιφερόμενοι ἄνθη τότε ἀκμάζοντα*, "carrying palms and laurels along with them, and throwing about all sorts of flowers that were then in season." In this manner our Lord being entered the city, he soon after retired to Bethany, whence he despatched Peter and John to make preparations for the passover;^b giving them instructions where he would have it kept. Accordingly, they found the person he had described to them, whom they followed home to his house. Whether this was the house of John the Evangelist, (as Nicephorus tells us,^c) situate near mount Sion, or of Simon the Leper, or of Nicodemus, or of Joseph of Arimathea, as others severally conjecture, seeing none of the evangelists have thought fit to tell us, it may not become us curiously to inquire.

^a Matt. xxi. 1.

^a Herod. l. i. s. 17. in vit. Comm.

^b Matt. xxvi. 17. Mark xiv. 12. Luke xxii. 7.

^c Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 28.

SECTION V.

OF ST. PETER, FROM THE LAST PASSOVER TILL THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

The passover celebrated by our Lord and his apostles. His washing their feet. Peter's imprudent modesty. The mystery and meaning of the action. The traitor, who. The Lord's supper instituted. Peter's confident promise of suffering with and for Christ. Our Lord's dislike of his confidence, and foretelling his denial. Their going to the Mount of Olives. Peter renews his resolution. His indiscreet zeal and affection. Our Saviour's passion, why begun in a garden. The bitterness of his ante-passion. The drowsiness of Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. Our Lord's great candour towards them, and what it ought to teach us. Christ's apprehension, and Peter's bold attempt upon Malchus. Christ deserted by the apostles. Peter's following his Master to the high-priest's hall, and thrice denying him with oaths and imprecations. The Galilean dialect, what. The cock-crowing, and Peter's repentance upon it.

ALL things being now prepared, our Saviour, with his apostles, comes down for the celebration of the passover: and being entered into the house, they all orderly took their places. Our Lord, who had always taught them by his practice, no less than by his doctrine, did now particularly design to teach them humility and charity by his own example; and that the instance might be the greater, he underwent the meanest offices of the ministry. Towards the end, therefore, of the paschal supper, he arose from the table, and laying aside his upper garment,^d (which, according to the fashion of those eastern countries, being long, was unfit for action,) and himself taking a towel, and pouring water into a bason, he began to wash all the apostles' feet, not disdaining those of Judas himself. Coming to Peter, he would by no means admit an instance of so much condescension. What? the master do this to the servant? the Son of God to so vile a sinner? This made him a second time refuse it: "thou shalt never wash my feet." But our Lord soon corrects his imprudent modesty, by telling him, that "if he washed him not, he could have no part with him:" insinuating the mystery of this action, which was to denote remission of sin, and the purifying virtue of the Spirit of Christ to be poured upon all true Christians. Peter, satisfied with the answer, soon altered his resolution; "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head:" if the case be so, let me be washed all over, rather than come short of my portion in thee. This being done, he

^d John xiii. 4.

returned again to the table, and acquainted them with the meaning and tendency of this mystical action, and what force it ought to have upon them towards one another.* The washing itself denoted their inward and spiritual cleansing by the blood and Spirit of Christ, symbolically typified and represented by all the washings and baptisms of the Mosaic institution: the washing of the feet respected our entire sanctification of our whole spirit, soul and body, no part being to be left impure. And then, that all this should be done by so great a person, their Lord and Master, preached to their very senses a sermon of the greatest humility and condescension, and taught them how little reason they had to boggle at the meanest offices of kindness and charity towards others, when he himself had stooped to so low an abasement towards them. And now he began more immediately to reflect upon his sufferings, and upon him who was to be the occasion of them; telling them, that one of them would be the traitor to betray him: whereat they were strangely troubled, and every one began to suspect himself, till Peter (whose love and care for his Master commonly made him start sooner than the rest) made signs to St. John, who lay in our Saviour's bosom, to ask him particularly who it was? which our Saviour presently did, by making them understand that it was Judas Iscariot; who not long after left the company.

II. And now our Lord began the institution of his supper, that great solemn institution which he was resolved to leave behind him, to be constantly celebrated in all ages of the church, as the standing monument of his love in dying for mankind. For now he told them, that he himself must leave them, and that "whither he went, they could not come."^f Peter, not well understanding what he meant, asked him, whither it was that he was going? Our Lord replied, it was to that place, whither he could not now follow him; but that he should do it afterwards: intimating the martyrdom he was to undergo for the sake of Christ. To which Peter answered, that he knew no reason why he might not follow him; seeing that if it was even to the laying down of his life for his sake, he was most ready and resolved to do it. Our Lord liked not this over-confident presumption, and therefore told him, they were great things which he promised, but that he took not the true measures of his

* Vid. Nonn. Paraphr. in loc.

^f John xiii. 36. Luke xxii. 31.

own strength, nor espied the snares and designs of Satan, who desired no better an occasion than this, to sift and winnow them. But that he prayed to heaven for him, "that his faith might not fail:" by which means being strengthened himself, he should be obliged to strengthen and confirm his brethren. And whereas he so confidently assured him, that he was ready to go along with him, not only into prison, but even to death itself; our Lord plainly told him, that notwithstanding all his confident and generous resolutions, before "the cock crowed twice," that is, before three of the clock in the morning, he would that very night three several times deny his Master. With which answer our Lord wisely rebuked his confidence, and taught him (had he understood the lesson) not to trust to his own strength, but entirely to depend upon him, who is able to keep us from falling: withal insinuating, that though by his sin he would justly forfeit the divine grace and favour, yet upon his repentance he should be restored to the honour of the apostolate, as a certain evidence of the divine goodness and indulgence to him.*

III. Having sung an hymn, and concluded the whole affair, he left the house where all these things had been transacted, and went with his apostles unto the Mount of Olives:^b where he again put them in mind how much they would be offended at those things which he was now to suffer; and Peter again renewed his resolute and undaunted promise of suffering, and dying with him; yea, out of an excessive confidence, told him, that "though all the rest should forsake and deny him, yet would not he deny him." How far will zeal and an indiscreet affection transport even a good man into vanity and presumption! Peter questions others, but never doubts himself. So natural is self-love, so apt are we to take the fairest measures of ourselves. Nay, though our Lord had, but a little before, once and again reproved this vain humour, yet does he still not only persist, but grow up in it: so hardly are we brought to espy our own faults, or to be so thoroughly convinced of them, as to correct and reform them. This confidence of his inspired all the rest with a mighty courage, all the apostles likewise assuring him of their constant and unshaken adhering to him; our Lord returning the same answer to Peter which he had done before:

* Vid. Tit. Bostr. Com. in Luc. xxii. in Bibl. patr. Gr. Lat. vol. ii. p. 329. ed. 1624.

^b Matt. xxvi. 30. Mark xiv. 26.

From hence they went down into the village of Gethsemane, where, leaving the rest of the apostles, he, accompanied with none but Peter, James, and John, retired into a neighbouring garden, (whither, Eusebius tells us,ⁱ Christians even in his time were wont to come, solemnly to offer up their prayers to heaven; and where, as the Arabian geographer informs us,^k a fair and stately church was built to the honour of the Virgin Mary,) to enter upon the ante-scene of the fatal tragedy that was now approaching; it bearing a very fit proportion, (as some of the fathers have observed,^l) that as the first Adam fell and ruined mankind in a garden, so a garden should be the place where the second Adam should begin his passion, in order to the redemption of the world. Gardens, which to us are places of repose and pleasure, and scenes of divertisement and delight, were to our Lord a school of temptation, a theatre of great honours and sufferings, and the first approaches of the hour of darkness.

IV. Here it was that the blessed Jesus laboured under the bitterest agony that could fall upon human nature, which the holy story describes by words sufficiently expressive of the highest grief and sorrow, he was afraid, sorrowful, and very heavy; yea, his soul was *περίλυπος*, “exceeding sorrowful,” and that even unto death; he was “sore amazed, and very heavy;” he was “troubled,” *ἐταράχθη*, his soul was shaken with a vehement commotion; yea, he was “in an agony,” a word by which the Greeks were wont to represent the greatest conflicts and anxieties. The effect of all which was, that “he prayed more earnestly,” offering up “prayers and supplications with strong cries and tears,” as the apostle expounds it, and “sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground.” What this bloody sweat was, and how far natural or extraordinary, I am not now concerned to inquire. Certain it is, it was a plain evidence of the most intense grief and sadness; for if an extreme fear or trouble will many times cast us into a cold sweat, how great must be the commotion and conflict of our Saviour’s mind, which could force open the pores of his body, locked up by the coldness of the night, and make not drops of sweat, but “great drops” or (as the word *θρόμβοι* signifies) “clods” of blood to issue from them. While our Lord was thus contending

ⁱ De loc. Hebr. in voc. Γεθσεμανῆ.

^k Geogr. Nub. Clim. iii. par. v. p. 114.

^l Cyril. Comment. in Joan. xviii. Theophylact. in Joan. xviii.

with these ante-passions, the three apostles, whom he had left at some distance from him, being tired out with watching, and disposed by the silence of the night, were fallen fast asleep. Our Lord, who had made three several addresses unto heaven, that, if it might consist with his Father's will, this bitter "cup might pass from him," (expressing herein the harmless and innocent desires of human nature, which always studies its own preservation,) between each of them came to visit the apostles; and calling to Peter, asked him, "whether they could not watch with him one hour?" advising them "to watch and pray, that they entered not into temptation;" adding this argument, that "the spirit indeed was willing, but that the flesh was weak," and that therefore there was the more need that they should stand upon their guard. Observe here the incomparable sweetness, the generous candour of our blessed Saviour, to pass so charitable a censure upon an action, from whence malice and ill-nature might have drawn monsters and prodigies, and have represented it black as the shades of darkness. The request which our Lord made to these apostles was infinitely reasonable, to watch with him in his bitter agony, their company at least being some refreshment to one under such sad fatal circumstances; and this, but for a little time, one hour, it would soon be over, and then they might freely consult their own ease and safety: it was their dear Lord and Master whom they now were to attend upon, ready to lay down his life for them, sweating already under the first skirmishes of his sufferings, and expecting every moment when all the powers of darkness would fall upon him. But all these considerations were drowned in a profound security; the men were fast asleep, and though often awakened and told of it, regarded it not, as if nothing but ease and softness had been then to be dreamed of: an action that looked like the most prodigious ingratitude, and the highest unconcernedness for their Lord and Master, and which one would have thought had argued a very great coldness and indifferency of affection towards him. But he would not set it upon the tenters, nor stretch it to what it might easily have been drawn to: he imputes it not to their unthankfulness, or want of affection, nor to their carelessness of what became of him, but merely to their infirmity, and the weakness of their bodily temper, himself making the excuse, when they could make none for

themselves, "the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Hereby teaching us, to put the most candid and favourable construction upon those actions of others, which are capable of various interpretations; and rather with the bee to suck honey, than with the spider to draw poison from them. His last prayer being ended, he came to them, and told them, with a gentle rebuke, that now they might "sleep on" if they pleased; that "the hour was at hand that he should be betrayed, and delivered into the hands of men."

V. While he was thus discoursing to them, a band of soldiers, sent from the high-priests, with the traitor Judas to conduct and direct them, rushed into the garden and seized upon him; which when the apostles saw, they asked him whether they should attempt his rescue? Peter, (whose ungovernable zeal put him upon all dangerous undertakings,) without staying for an answer, drew his sword, and espying one more busy than the rest in laying hold upon our Saviour, which was Malchus, (who, though carrying kingship in his name, was but servant to the high-priest,) struck at him, with an intention to despatch him; but God overruling the stroke, it only cut off his right ear. Our Lord liked not this wild and unwarrantable zeal, and therefore entreated their patience, whilst he miraculously healed the wound. And turning to Peter, bade him put up his sword again; told him, that they who unwarrantably used the sword, should themselves perish by it; that there was no need of these violent and extravagant courses; that if he had a mind to be rid of his keepers, he could ask his Father, who would presently send more than twelve legions of angels to his rescue and deliverance: but he must drink the cup which his father had put into his hand: for how else should the scriptures be fulfilled, which had expressly foretold, "that these things must be?" Whereupon all the apostles forsook him, and fled from him; and they who before in their promises were as bold as lions, now it came to it, like fearful and timorous hares, ran away from him: Peter and John, though staying last with him, yet followed the same way with the rest, preferring their own safety before the concerns of their Master.

VI. No sooner was he apprehended by the soldiers, and brought out of the garden, but he was immediately posted from one tribunal to another: brought first to Annas, then carried to

Caiaphas, where the Jewish Sanhedrim met together in order to his trial and condemnation.^m Peter having a little recovered himself, and gotten loose from his fears, probably encouraged by his companion St. John, returns back to seek his Master; and finding them leading him to the high-priest's hall, followed afar off, to see what would be the event and issue. But coming to the door, could get no admittance, till one of the disciples, who was acquainted there, went out and persuaded the servant who kept the door to let him in. Being let into the hall, where the servants and officers stood round the fire, Peter also came thither to warm himself; where being espied by the servant-maid that let him in, she, earnestly looking upon him, charged him with being one of Christ's disciples; which Peter publicly denied before all the company, positively affirming that "he knew him not;" and presently withdrew himself into the porch, where he heard the cock crow: an intimation which, one would have thought, should have awakened his conscience into a quick sense of his duty, and the promise he had made unto his Master. In the porch, another of the maids set upon him, charging him that "he also was one of them that had been with Jesus of Nazareth:" which Peter stoutly denied, saying, that "he knew not Christ;" and the better to gain their belief to what he said, ratified it with an oath. So natural is it for one sin to draw on another.

VII. About an hour after, he was a third time set upon by a servant of the high-priest, Malchus's kinsman, whose ear Peter had lately cut off: by him he was charged to be one of Christ's disciples; yea, "that his very speech betrayed him to be a Galilean." For the Galileans, though they did not speak a different language, had yet a different dialect, using a more confused and barbarous, a broader and more unpolished way of pronunciation than the rest of the Jews, whereby they were easily distinguishable in their speaking from other men; abundant instances whereof there are extant in the Talmud at this day. Nay, not only gave this evidence, but added, that he himself had seen him with Jesus in the garden. Peter still resolutely denied the matter; and to add the highest accomplishment to his sin, ratified it not only with an oath, but a solemn curse and execration, that "he was not the person," that "he knew not the man." It is but a very weak excuse which St. Ambrose

^m Matt. xxvi. 57. Mark xiv. 53. Luke xxii. 54. John xviii. 12.

and some others make for this act of Peter's,ⁿ in saying, "I knew not the man." "He did well (says he) to deny him to be man, whom he knew to be God." St. Hierom takes notice of this pious and well-meant excuse made for Peter,^o though out of modesty he conceals the name of its author, but yet justly censures it as trifling and frivolous, and which, to excuse man from folly, would charge God with falsehood: for if he did not deny him, then our Lord was out, when he said, that "that night he should thrice deny him," that is, his person, and not only his humanity. Certainly the best apology that can be made for Peter is, that he quickly repented of this great sin; for no sooner had he done it, but the cock crew again; at which intimation our Saviour turned about, and earnestly looked upon him: a glance that quickly pierced him to the heart, and brought to his remembrance what our Lord had once and again foretold him of, how foully and shamefully he should deny him: whereupon, not being able to contain his sorrow, he ran out of doors to give it vent, and wept bitterly, passionately bewailing his folly, and the aggravations of his sin; thereby endeavouring to make some reparation for his fault, and recover himself into the favour of heaven, and to prevent the execution of divine justice, by taking a severe revenge upon himself: by these penitential tears he endeavoured to wash off his guilt, as indeed repentance is the next step to innocence.

SECTION VI.

OF ST. PETER, FROM CHRIST'S RESURRECTION TILL HIS ASCENSION.

Our Lord's care to acquaint Peter with his resurrection. His going to the sepulchre. Christ's appearance to Peter, when, and the reasons of it. The apostle's journey into Galilee. Christ's appearing to them at the sea at Tiberias. His being discovered by the great draught of fishes. Christ's questioning Peter's love, and why. "Feed my sheep," commended to Peter, imports no peculiar supereminent power and sovereignty. Peter's death and sufferings foretold. Our Lord takes his last leave of the apostles at

ⁿ Bene negavit hominem, quem sciebat Deum. Ambr. in Luc. xxii. vid. Hilar. comment. in Matt. c. xxxii. s. 5.

^o Hier. in Matt. xxvi. vol. iv. par. i. p. 132. vid. August. in Joan. Tract. lxvi. s. 2. vol. iii. par. ii. p. 676.

Bethany. His ascension into heaven: The chapel of the ascension. The apostles' joy at their Lord's exaltation.

WHAT became of Peter after his late prevarication, whether he followed our Saviour through the several stages of his trial, and personally attended as a mourner at the funeral of his Master, we have no account left upon record. No doubt he stayed at Jerusalem, and probably with St. John, together with whom we first find him mentioned, when both setting forwards to the sepulchre: which was in this manner. Early on that morning,^p whereon our Lord was to return from the grave, Mary Magdalen, and some other devout and pious women, brought spices and ointments, with a design to embalm the body of our crucified Lord. Coming to the sepulchre at sun-rising, and finding the door open, they entered in, where they were suddenly saluted by an angel, who told them that Jesus was risen, and bade them go and acquaint his apostles, and particularly Peter, that he was returned from the dead; and that he would go before them into Galilee, where they should meet with him. Hereupon they returned back, and acquainted the apostles with what had passed: who beheld the story as the product of a weak frightened fancy. But Peter and John presently hastened towards the garden;^q John, being the younger and nimbler, outran his companion, and came first thither, where he only looked, but entered not in, either out of fear in himself or a great reverence to our Saviour. Peter, though behind in space, was before in zeal, and being elder and more considerate, came and resolutely entered in, where they found nothing but the linen clothes lying together in one place, and the napkin that was about his head wrapped together in another; which being disposed with so much care and order, shewed (what was falsely suggested by the Jews) that our Saviour's body was not taken away by thieves, who are wont more to consult their escape, than how to leave things orderly disposed behind them.

II. The same day, about noon we may suppose it was that, our Lord himself appeared alone to Peter; being assured of the thing, though not so precisely of the time. That he did so, St. Paul expressly tells us;^r and so did the apostles to the two disciples that came from Emmaus,^s "the Lord is risen, and hath

^p Mark xvi. 1.

^r 1 Cor. xv. 5.

^q Luke xxiv. 12. John xx. 2.

^s Luke xxiv. 34.

appeared unto Simon:" which probably intimates, that it was before his appearing to those two disciples. And, indeed, we cannot but think that our Lord would hasten the manifestation of himself to him, as compassionating his case, being overwhelmed with sorrow for the late shameful denial of his Master: and was therefore willing in the first place to honour him with his presence, at once to confirm him in the article of his resurrection, and to let him see that he was restored to the place which before he had in his grace and favour. St. Paul, mentioning his several appearances after his resurrection, seems to make this the first of them, "that he was seen of Cephas." Not that it was simply the first, for he first appeared to the women. But, as Chrysostom observes,¹ it was the first that was made to men. He was first seen by him who most desired to see him. He also adds several probable conjectures, why our Lord first discovered himself to Peter: as, that it required a more than ordinary firmness and resolution of mind, to be able to bear such a sight; for they who beheld him after others had seen him, and had heard their frequent testimonies and reports, had had their faith greatly prepared and encouraged to entertain it; but he who was to be honoured with the first appearance had need of a bigger and more undaunted faith, lest he should be overborne, τῷ παραδόξῳ τῆς θέας, "with such a strange and unwonted sight:" that Peter was the first that had made a signal confession of his Master, and therefore it was fit and reasonable that he should first see him alive after his resurrection: that Peter had lately denied his lord, the grief whereof lay hard upon him, that therefore our Saviour was willing to administer some consolation to him, and, as soon as might be, to let him see that he had not cast him off: like the kind Samaritan, he made haste to help him, and to pour oil into his wounded conscience.

III. Some time after this, the apostles began to resolve upon their journey into Galilee, as he himself had commanded them. If it be inquired, why they went no sooner, seeing this was the first message and intimation they had received from him; St. Ambrose's resolution seems very rational,² that our Lord indeed had commanded them to go thither, but that their fears for some

¹ Ἐν ἀνδράσι τοῦτ' πρώτῳ, τῷ μάλιστα αὐτὸν ποθοῦντι ἰδεῖν. Chrys. in 1 ad Cor. c. xv. Hom. xxxviii. s. 4. vol. x. p. 355, 6.

² Comm. in Luc. xxiv. in fin.

time kept them at home ; not being as yet fully satisfied in the truth of his resurrection, till our Lord, by often appearing to them, had confirmed their minds, and put the case beyond all dispute. They went, as we may suppose, in several companies, lest going all in one body they should awaken the power and malice of their enemies, and alarm the care and vigilancy of the state, which, by reason of the noise that our Saviour's trial and execution had made up and down the city and country, was yet full of jealousies and fears. We find Peter, Thomas, Nathanael,^w and the two sons of Zebedee, and two more of the disciples, arrived at some town about the sea of Tiberias ; where, the providence of God guiding the instance of their employment, Peter, accompanied with the rest, returns to his old trade of fishing. They laboured all night, but caught nothing. Early in the morning, a grave person, probably in the habit of a traveller, presents himself upon the shore ; and calling to them, asked them whether they had any meat : when they told him, No ; he advised them to cast the net on the right side of the ship, that so the miracle might not seem to be the effect of chance, and they should not fail to speed. They did so, and the net presently inclosed so great a draught, that they were scarce able to drag it ashore. St. John, amazed with the strangeness of the matter, told Peter that surely this must be the Lord, whom the winds and the sea, and all the inhabitants of that watery region, were so ready to obey. Peter's zeal presently took fire, notwithstanding the coldness of the season, and impatient of the least moments being kept from the company of his dear Lord and Master, without any consideration of the danger to which he exposed himself, he girt his fisher's coat about him, and throwing himself into the sea, swam to shore, not being able to stay till the ship could arrive, which came presently after.^x Landing, they found a fire ready made, and fish laid upon it, either immediately created by his divine power, or which came to the shore of its own accord, and offered itself to his hand : which notwithstanding, he commands them to bring of the fish which they had lately caught, and prepare it for their dinner, he himself dining with them ; both that he might give them an instance of mutual love and fellowship, and also assure them of the truth of his human nature, since his return from the dead.

^w John xxi. 1.

^x Vid. Nonn. Paraphr. in loc.

IV. Dinner being ended, our Lord more particularly addressed himself to Peter, urging him to the utmost diligence in his care of souls: and because he knew that nothing but a mighty love to himself could carry him through the troubles and hazards of so dangerous and difficult an employment, an employment attended with all the impediments which either the perverseness of men or the malice and subtilty of the devil could cast in the way to hinder it, therefore he first inquired of him, whether he loved him more than the rest of the apostles? herein mildly reproving his former over-confident resolution, that "though all the rest should deny him, yet would not he deny him." Peter modestly replied, not censuring others, much less preferring himself before them, that our Lord knew the integrity of his affection towards him. This question he puts three several times to Peter, who as often returned the same answer: it being but just and reasonable, that he who by a threefold denial had given so much cause to question, should now by a threefold confession give more than ordinary assurance of his sincere affection to his Master.⁷ Peter was a little troubled at his frequent questioning of his love, and therefore more expressly appeals to our Lord's omniscieny, that he, who knew all things, must needs know that he loved him. To each of these confessions, our Lord added this signal trial of his affection, then "Feed my sheep;" that is, faithfully instruct and teach them, carefully rule and guide them; persuade, not compel them; feed, not fleece, nor kill them. And so it is plain St. Peter himself understood it, by the charge which he gives to the guides and rulers of the church, that "they should feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but as examples to the flock."⁸ But that "by feeding Christ's sheep and lambs," here commended to St. Peter, should be meant an universal and uncontrollable monarchy and dominion over the whole Christian church, and that over the apostles themselves and their successors in ordinary, and this power and supremacy solely invested in St. Peter, and those who were to succeed him in the see of Rome, is so wild an inference, and such a melting

⁷ Isid. Pelus. l. i. ep. 103. Redditur negationi trinæ trina confessio, ne minus amoris linguæ serviat, quam timori; et plus vocis eliciuisse videatur mors imminens, quam vita præsens. Aug. in Joan. Tract. cxxiii. s. 5. vol. iii. par. ii. p. 817.

⁸ 1 Pet. v. 1, 2, 3.

down words to run into any shape, as could never with any face have been offered, or been possible to have been imposed upon the belief of mankind, if men had not first subdued their reason to their interest, and captivated both to an implicit faith and a blind obedience. For granting that our Lord here addressed his speech only unto Peter, yet the very same power in equivalent terms is elsewhere indifferently granted to all the apostles, and in some measure to the ordinary pastors and governors of the church: as when our Lord told them, that "all power was given him in heaven and in earth," by virtue whereof "they should go teach and baptize all nations," and "preach the gospel to every creature;" that "they should feed God's flock," "rule well," inspect and "watch over" those over whom they had the authority and rule: words of as large and more express signification, than those which were here spoken to St. Peter.

V. Our Lord having thus engaged Peter to a cheerful compliance with the dangers that might attend the discharge and execution of his office, now particularly intimates to him what that fate was that should attend him: telling him, that though when he was young he girt himself, lived at his own pleasure, and went whither he pleased; yet when he was old, he should stretch forth his hands, and another should gird and bind him, and lead him whither he had no mind to go: intimating, as the evangelist tells us, "by what death he should glorify God," that is by crucifixion, the martyrdom which he afterward underwent: and then rising up, commanded him to follow him; by this bodily attendance mystically implying his conformity to the death of Christ, that he should follow him in dying for the truth and testimony of the gospel. It was not long after, that our Lord appeared to them to take his last farewell of them;^a when leading them out unto Bethany, a little village upon the Mount of Olives, he briefly told them, that they were the persons whom he had chosen to be the witnesses both of his death and resurrection; a testimony which they should bear to him in all parts of the world: in order to which he would after his ascension pour out his Spirit upon them in larger measures than they had hitherto received, that they might be the better fortified to grapple with that violent rage and fury wherewith both men and devils would endeavour to oppose them; and that in the

^a Acts i. 8. Luke xxiv. 49.

mean time they should return to Jerusalem, and stay till these miraculous powers were from on high conferred upon them. His discourse being ended, laying his hands upon them, he gave them his solemn blessing; which done, he was immediately taken from them, and, being attended with a glorious guard and train of angels, was received up into heaven. Antiquity tells us,^b that in the place where he last trod upon the rock, the impression of his feet did remain, which could never afterwards be filled up or impaired, over which Helena, mother of the great Constantine, afterwards built a little chapel, called the Chapel of the Ascension: in the floor whereof, upon a whitish kind of stone, modern travellers tell us,^c that the impression of his foot is shewed at this day; but it is that of his right foot only, the other being taken away by the Turks, and, as it is said, kept in the temple at Jerusalem. Our Lord being thus taken from them, the apostles were filled with a greater sense of his glory and majesty, than while he was wont familiarly to converse with them; and having performed their solemn adorations to him, returned back to Jerusalem, waiting for the promise of the Holy Ghost, which was shortly after conferred upon them, "They worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy."^d They who lately were overwhelmed with sorrow at the very mention of their Lord's departure from them, entertained it now with joy and triumph, being fully satisfied of his glorious advancement at God's right hand, and of that particular care and providence which they were sure he would exercise towards them, in pursuance of those great trusts he had committed to them.

SECTION VII.

ST. PETER'S ACTS FROM OUR LORD'S ASCENSION TILL THE DISPERSION OF THE CHURCH.

The apostles return to Jerusalem. The *ὑπερῶς*, or "upper room," where they assembled, what. Peter declares the necessity of a new apostle's being chosen in the room of Judas. The promise of the Holy Ghost made upon the day of pentecost. The Spirit descended in the likeness of fiery cloven tongues, and why. The greatness of the miracle. Peter's vindication of the apostles from the slanders of the Jews, and proving

^b Paulin. Epist. iii. ad Sever. de invent. crucis. Sulp. Sever. Hist. Sacr. l. ii. c. 33. Hieron. de loc. Heb. in Act. App.

^c J. Cotovic. Itin. l. ii. c. 11. vid. Sands. Relat. l. iii. p. 156.

^d Luke xxiv. 52.

Christ to be the promised Messiah. Great numbers converted by his sermon. His going up to the temple. What their stated hours of prayer. His curing the impotent cripple there, and discourse to the Jews upon it. What numbers converted by him. Peter and John seized, and cast into prison. Brought before the Sanhedrim, and their resolute carriage there. Their refusing to obey, when commanded not to preach Christ. The great security the Christian religion provides for subjection to magistrates in all lawful instances of obedience. The severity used by Peter towards Ananias and Sapphira. The great miracles wrought by him. Again cast into prison, and delivered by an angel. Their appearing before the Sanhedrim; and deliverance, by the prudent counsels of Gamaliel.

THE holy Jesus being gone to heaven, the apostles began to act according to the power and commission he had left with them. In order whereunto, the first thing they did after his ascension, was to fill up the vacancy in their college, lately made by the unhappy fall and apostacy of Judas. To which end, no sooner were they returned to Jerusalem, but they went *εἰς ὑπερώον*, "into an upper room." Where this *ὑπερώον* was, whether in the house of St. John, or of Mary, John Mark's mother, or in some of the out-rooms belonging to the temple, (for the temple had, over the cloisters, several chambers for the service of the priests and Levites, and as respositories where the consecrated vessels and utensils of the temple were laid up; though it be not probable that the Jews, and especially the priests, would suffer the apostles and their company to be so near the temple,) I stand not to inquire. It is certain that the Jews usually had their *ὑπερώα*, "private oratories," in the upper parts of their houses, called עליית, for the more private exercises of their devotions. Thus Daniel^e had his עליית, "upper-chamber," (τὰ ὑπερώα, the Seventy render it,) whither he was wont to retire to pray to his God: and Benjamin the Jew tells us,^f that in his time, (Ann. Chr. 1172,) the Jews at Babylon were wont to pray, both in their synagogues, ועליית בניא, and in that ancient upper-room of Daniel which the prophet himself built. Such an *ὑπερώον*, or "upper chamber," was that wherein St. Paul preached at Troas:^g and such probably this, where the apostles were now met together, and in all likelihood the same where our Lord had lately kept the passover, where the apostles and the church were assembled on the day of pentecost, and which was then the usual place of their religious assemblies, as we have elsewhere observed more at large.^h Here

^e Dan. vi. 10.

^f Benj. Itin. p. 76.

^g Acts xx. 8.

^h Prim. Christ. par. i. c. 6.

the church being met, to the number of about one hundred and twenty, Peter, as president of the assembly, began to speak, and, applying himself to the whole congregation, proposed to them the choice of a new apostle. And it is the remark which St. Chrysostom makes upon this passage,ⁱ that Peter herein would do nothing without the common consent and approbation, *οὐδὲν αὐθεντικῶς, οὐδὲ ἀρχικῶς*, assuming no peculiar super-eminent power and authority to himself. He put them in mind, that Judas,^j one of our Lord's apostles, being betrayed by his own covetous and insatiable mind, had lately fallen from the honour of his place and ministry: that this was no more than what the prophet had long since foretold should come to pass, and that the rule and oversight in the church, which had been committed unto him, should be devolved upon another: that therefore it was highly necessary, that one should be substituted in his room, and especially such a one as had been familiarly conversant with our Saviour, from first to last, that so he might be a competent witness both of his doctrine and miracles, his life and death, but especially of his resurrection from the dead. For, seeing no evidence is so valid and satisfactory as the testimony of an eyewitness, the apostles all along mainly insisted upon this, that they delivered no other things concerning our Saviour to the world, than what they themselves had seen and heard. And seeing his rising from the dead was a principle likely to meet with a great deal of opposition, and which would hardest gain belief and entertainment with the minds of men, therefore they principally urged this at every turn, that "they were eyewitnesses of his resurrection;" that they had seen, felt, eaten, and familiarly conversed with him after his return from the grave. That therefore such an apostle might be chosen, two candidates were proposed: Joseph, called Barsabas, and Matthias. And having prayed that the divine providence would immediately guide and direct the choice, they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, who was accordingly admitted into the number of the twelve apostles.

II. Fifty days since the last passover being now run out, made way for the feast of pentecost:^k at what time the great promise of the Holy Ghost was fully made good unto them. The Christian assembly being met together for the public services

ⁱ Homil. iii. in Act.^j Acts i. 15^k Acts ii. 1.

of their worship, on a sudden a sound, like that of a mighty wind, rushed in upon them; representing the powerful efficacy of that Divine Spirit that was now to be communicated to them; after which there appeared little flames of fire, which, in the fashion of cloven tongues, not only descended, but sat upon each of them, probably to note their perpetual enjoyment of this gift upon all occasions, that, when necessary, they should never be without it; not like the prophetic gifts of old, which were conferred but sparingly, and only at some particular times and seasons; as the "seventy elders prophesied and ceased not,"¹ but it was only at such times "as the Spirit came down and rested upon them." Hereupon they were all immediately filled with the Holy Ghost, which enabled them in an instant to speak several languages, which they had never learned, and probably never heard of, together with other miraculous gifts and powers. Thus as the confounding of languages became a curse to the old world, separating men from all mutual offices of kindness and commerce, rendering one part of mankind barbarians to another; so here, the multiplying several languages became a blessing, being intended as the means to bring men of all nations "into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God," into the fellowship of that religion that would banish discords, cement differences, and unite men's hearts in the bond of peace. The report of so sudden and strange an action presently spread itself into all corners of the city, and there being at that time at Jerusalem multitudes of Jewish proselytes, "devout men out of every nation under heaven;" "Parthians, Medes, Elamites, (or Persians,) the dwellers in Mesopotamia and Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia Minor, from Phrygia and Pamphylia, from Egypt and the parts of Libya and Cyrene, from Rome, from Crete, from Arabia, Jews and proselytes;" (probably drawn thither by the general report and expectation which had spread itself over all the Eastern parts,² and in a manner over all places of the Roman empire, of the Jewish Messiah, that about this time should be born at Jerusalem;) they no sooner heard of it, but universally flocked to this Christian assembly; where

¹ Numb. xi. 25.

² Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Id de Imperatore, etc. Sueton. in vit. Vespas. c. 4. eadem habet Tacitus Histor. l. v. c. 13.

they were amazed to hear these Galileans speaking to them in their own native languages, so various, so vastly different from one other. And it could not but exceedingly increase the wonder, to reflect upon the meanness and inconsiderableness of the persons, neither assisted by natural parts, nor polished by education, nor improved by use and custom : which three things philosophers require to render a man accurate and extraordinary in any art or discipline : φύσις γὰρ ἀνευ μαθήσεως τυφλόν· μάθησις δίχα φύσεως ἀλλιπές· ἀσκησις χωρὶς ἀμφοῖν ἀτελές, says Plutarch : " natural disposition, without institution, is blind ; instruction, without a genius and disposition, is defective ; and exercise, without both, is lame and imperfect." Whereas these disciples had not one of these to set them off : their parts were mean, below the rate of the common people, the Galileans being generally accounted the rudest and most stupid of the whole Jewish nation : their education had been no higher than to catch fish, and to mend nets ; nor had they been used to plead causes, or to deliver themselves before great assemblies ; but spoke on a sudden, not premeditated discourses, not idle stories, or wild roving fancies, but the great and admirable works of God, and the mysteries of the gospel beyond human apprehensions to find out ; and this delivered in almost all the languages of the then known world. Men were severally affected with it, according to their different tempers and apprehensions : some admiring, and not knowing what to think of it ; others, deriding it, said, that it was nothing else but the wild raving effect of drunkenness and intemperance. At so wild a rate are men of profane minds wont to talk, when they take upon them to pass their censure in the things of God.

III. Hereupon the apostles rose up, and Peter, in the name of the rest, took this occasion of discoursing to them : he told them, that this scandalous slander proceeded from the spirit of malice and falsehood ; that their censure was as uncharitable as it was unreasonable ; that " they that are drunken are drunk in the night ;" that it was against nature and custom for men to be in drink so soon, too early for such a suspicion to take place, it being now but about nine of the clock, the hour for morning prayer, till when men, even of ordinary sobriety and devotion, on festival-days were wont to fast ;^a that these extraordinary and

^a Περ. παλδ. ἀγωγ. p. 2.

^o Vid. Joseph. de vit. sua, p. 1020.

miraculous passages were but the accomplishment of an ancient prophecy, the fulfilling of what God had expressly foretold should come to pass in the times of the Messiah : that Jesus of Nazareth had evidently approved himself to be the Messiah sent from God, by many unquestionable miracles, of which they themselves had been eyewitnesses : and though, by God's permission, who had determined by this means to bring about the salvation of mankind, they had wickedly crucified and slain him, yet that God had raised him from the dead : that it was not possible he should be holden always under the dominion of the grave ; nor was it consistent with the justice and goodness of God, and especially with those divine predictions which had expressly foretold he should rise again from the dead : David having more particularly foretold, "that his flesh should rest in hope;" that "God would not leave his soul in hell, neither suffer his Holy One to see corruption," but "would make known to him the ways of life : " that this prophecy could not be meant concerning David himself, by whom it was spoken, he having many ages since been turned to ashes, his body resolved into rottenness and putrefaction, his tomb yet visible among them, from whence he never did return ; that therefore it must needs have been prophetically spoken concerning Christ, having never been truly fulfilled in any but him, who both died, and was risen again, whereof they were witnesses ; yea, that he was not only risen from the dead, but ascended into heaven, and, according to David's prediction, "sat down on God's right hand, until he made his enemies his footstool;" which could not be primarily meant of David, he never having yet bodily ascended into heaven ; that therefore the whole house of Israel ought to believe and take notice, that this very Jesus, whom they had crucified, was the person whom God had appointed to be the Messiah and the Saviour of his church.

IV. This discourse, in every part of it, like so many daggers, pierced them to the heart ; who thereupon cried out to Peter and his brethren, to know what they should do. Peter told them, that there was no other way, than by an hearty and sincere repentance, and a being baptized into the religion of this crucified Saviour, to expiate their guilt, to obtain pardon of sin, and the gifts and benefits of the Holy Ghost. That upon these terms, the promises of the new covenant, which was ratified by the death of Christ,

did belong to them and their children, and to all that should effectually believe and embrace the gospel : farther pressing and persuading them, by doing thus to save themselves from that unavoidable ruin and destruction which this wicked and unto-ward generation of obstinate unbelieving Jews were shortly to be exposed to. The effects of his preaching were strange and wonderful : as many as believed were baptized ; there being that day added to the church no less than three thousand souls : a quick and plentiful harvest ; the late sufferings of our Saviour, as yet fresh bleeding in their memories, the present miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost that appeared upon them, the zeal of his auditors, though heretofore misplaced and misguided, and, above all, the efficacy of divine grace, contributing to this numerous conversion.

V. Though the converting so vast a multitude might justly challenge a place amongst the greatest miracles, yet the apostles began now more particularly to exercise their miraculous power. Peter and John, going up to the temple,^p about three of the clock in the afternoon, towards the conclusion of one of the solemn hours of prayer, (for the Jews divided their day into four greater hours, each quarter containing three lesser under it, three of which were public and stated times of prayer, instituted, say they,^q by the three great patriarchs of their nation : the first, from six of the clock in the morning until nine, called hence, “ the third hour of the day,” instituted by Abraham ; this was called תפלת שחרית, or “ morning prayer :” the second, from nine till twelve, called “ the sixth hour,” and this hour of prayer ordained by Isaac ; this was called תפלת צהרים, or “ mid-day prayer :” the third, from twelve till three in the afternoon, called “ the ninth hour,” appointed by Jacob, called תפלת ערבית, or “ evening prayer ;” and at this hour it was that these two apostles went up to the temple, where) they found a poor impotent cripple, who, though above forty years old, had been lame from his birth, lying at the beautiful gate of the temple, and asking an alms of them. Peter, earnestly looking on him, told him, he had no money to give him, but that he would give him that which was a great deal better, restore him to his health ; and lifting him up by the hand, commanded him, in the name of “ Jesus of Nazareth, to rise up and walk.” The word was no sooner said, than the thing was done : immediately the nerves and sinews were

^p Acts iii. 1.

^q Vid. Drus. in Act. iii. 1.

enlarged, and the joints returned to their proper use: the man standing up, went into the temple, walking, leaping, and praising God. The beholding so sudden and extraordinary a cure begot great admiration in the minds of the people, whose curiosity drew them to the apostles, to see those who had been the authors of it: which Peter taking notice of, began to discourse to them to this effect: that there was no reason why they should wonder at them, as if by their own skill and art they had wrought this cure, it being entirely done in the name of their crucified Master, by the power of that very Christ, that holy and just person, whom they themselves had denied and delivered up to Pilate, and preferred a rebel and a murderer before him, when his judge was resolved to acquit him; and that though they had put him to death, yet that they were witnesses that God had raised him up again, and that he was gone to heaven, where he must remain till the times of the general restitution: that he presumed that this in them, as also in their rulers, was, in a great measure, the effect of ignorance, and the not being thoroughly convinced of the greatness and divinity of his person; which yet God made use of for the bringing about his wise and righteous designs, the accomplishing of what he had foretold, concerning Christ's person and sufferings, by Moses and Samuel, and all the holy "prophets which had been since the world began:" that, therefore it was now high time for them to repent, and turn to God, that their great wickedness might be expiated, and that when Christ should shortly come in judgment upon the Jewish nation, it might be a time of comfort and refreshing to them, what would be of vengeance and destruction to other men: that they were the peculiar persons to whom the blessings of the promises did primarily appertain, and unto whom God in the first place sent his Son, that he might derive his blessing upon them, by "turning them away from their iniquities." While Peter was thus discoursing to the people in one place, we may suppose that John was preaching to them in another; and the success was answerable: the apostles cast out the seed, and God immediately "gave the increase;" there being by this means no fewer than five thousand brought over to the faith:† though it is possible the whole body of believers might be comprehended in that number.

† Acts iv. 4.

VI. While the apostles were thus preaching,* the priests and Sadducees, (who particularly appeared in this business, as being enemies to all tumults, or whatever might disturb their present ease and quiet, the only portion of happiness they expected; besides that they hated Christianity, because so expressly asserting the resurrection,) being vexed to hear this doctrine vented amongst the people, intimated to the magistrate that this concourse might probably tend to an uproar and insurrection: whereupon they came with the captain of the temple, (commander of the tower of Antonia, which stood close by, on the north side of the temple, wherein was a Roman garrison to prevent or suppress, especially at festival times, popular tumults and uproars,) who seized on the apostles, and put them into prison. The next day they were convented before the Jewish Sanhedrim; and, being asked by what power and authority they had done this? Peter resolutely answered, that as to the cure done to this impotent person, be it known to them and all the Jews, that it was perfectly wrought in the name of that Jesus of Nazareth whom they themselves had crucified, and God had raised from the dead, and whom, though they had thrown him by, as waste and rubbish, yet God had made "head of the corner;" and that there was no other way wherein they or others could expect salvation, but by this crucified Saviour. Great was the boldness of the apostles, admired by the Sanhedrim itself, in this matter; especially if we consider that this probably was the very court that had so lately sentenced and condemned their Master, and being fleshed in such sanguinary proceedings, had no other way but to go on and justify one cruelty with another: that the apostles did not say these things in corners and behind the curtain, but to their very faces, and that in the open court of judicature, and before all the people: that the apostles had not been used to plead in such public places, nor had been polished with the arts of education, but were ignorant, unlearned men, known not to be versed in the study of the Jewish law.

VII. The council (which all this while had beheld them with a kind of wonder, and now remembered that they had been the companions and attendants of the late crucified Jesus) commanded them to withdraw, and debated amongst themselves

* Acts iv. 1.

what they should do with them. The miracle they could not deny, the fact being so plain and evident, and therefore resolved strictly to charge them, that they should preach no more in the name of Jesus. Being called in again, they acquainted them with the resolution of the council: to which Peter and John replied, that they could by no means yield obedience to it, appealing to themselves, whether it was not more fit that "they should obey God rather than them;" and that they could not but "testify what they had seen and heard." Nor did they in this answer make any undue reflection upon the power of the magistrates, and the obedience due to them, it being a ruled case by the first dictates of reason, and the common vote and suffrage of mankind, that parents and governors are not to be obeyed when their commands interfere with the obligations under which we stand to a superior power.[†] All authority is originally derived from God, and our duty to him may not be superseded by the laws of any authority deriving from him: and even Socrates himself, in a parallel instance, when persuaded to leave off his excellent way of institution and instructing youth, and to comply with the humour of his Athenian judges to save his life, returned this answer: that "indeed he loved and honoured the Athenians; but yet resolved to obey God rather than them:"[‡] an answer almost the same, both in substance and words, with that which was here given by our apostles. In all other cases, where the laws of the magistrate did not interfere with the commands of Christ, none more loyal, more compliant than they: as indeed no religion in the world ever secured the interests of civil authority like the religion of the gospel. It positively charges every soul, of what rank or condition soever, "to be subject to the higher powers," as a divine ordinance and institution; and that "not for wrath only, but for conscience sake:" it "puts men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates, to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, both to the king as supreme, and unto governors as unto them that are sent by him: for so is the will of God." So far is it from allowing us to violate their persons, that it suffers us not boldly to censure their actions, "to revile the gods, despise dominions, and speak evil of dignities;" or to vilify and

[†] Vid. Muson. apud Stob. Serm. 77. de honor. et obed. parent. debit. p. 458. ubi pluribus strenue et eleganter hac de re disserit. [‡] Socr. in. Apol. apud Plat. n. 11.

injure them so much as by a dishonourable thought; commanding us, when we cannot obey, to suffer the most rigorous penalties imposed upon us with calmness, and "to possess our souls in patience." Thus when these two apostles were shortly after again summoned before the council, commanded no more to preach the Christian doctrine, and to be scourged for what they had done already, though they could not obey the one, they cheerfully submitted to the other, without any peevish or tart reflections, but went away rejoicing. But what the carriage of Christians was in this matter in the first and best ages of the gospel, we have in another place sufficiently discovered to the world.* We may not withhold our obedience, till the magistrate invades God's throne, and countermands his authority, and may then appeal to the sense of mankind, whether it be not most reasonable, that God's authority should first take place, as the apostles here appealed to their very judges themselves. Nor do we find that the Sanhedrim did except against the plea. At least, whatever they thought, yet not daring to punish them for fear of the people, they only threatened them, and let them go: who thereupon presently returned to the rest of the apostles and believers.

VIII. The church exceedingly multiplied by these means: and that so great a company (most whereof were poor) might be maintained, they generally sold their estates, and brought the money to the apostles, to be by them deposited in one common treasury, and thence distributed according to the several exigencies of the church: which gave occasion to this dreadful instance.† Ananias and his wife Sapphira, having taken upon them the profession of the gospel, according to the free and generous spirit of those times, had consecrated and devoted their estate to the honour of God and the necessities of the church; and accordingly sold their possessions, and turned them into money. But as they were willing to gain the reputation of charitable persons, so were they loath wholly to cast themselves upon the divine providence, by letting go all at once, and therefore privately withheld part of what they had devoted, and bringing the rest, laid it at the apostles' feet: hoping herein they might deceive the apostles, though immediately guided by the Spirit of God. But Peter, at his first coming in, treated Ananias with these sharp inquiries: why he would suffer Satan to fill his

* Prim. Christ. par. iii. c. 4.

† Acts v. 1.

heart with so big a wickedness, as, by keeping back of his estate, to think to "deceive the Holy Ghost?" That before it was sold, it was wholly at his own disposal; and after, it was perfectly in his own power fully to have performed his vow: so that it was capable of no other interpretation, than that herein he had not only abused and injured men, but mocked God, and, what in him lay, lied to and cheated the Holy Ghost; who, he knew, was privy to the most secret thoughts and purposes of his heart. This was no sooner said, but suddenly, to the great terror and amazement of all that were present, Ananias was arrested with a stroke from heaven, and fell down dead to the ground. Not long after, his wife came in, whom Peter entertained with the same severe reproofs wherewith he had done her husband; adding, that the like sad fate and doom should immediately seize upon her, who thereupon dropped down dead; as she had been copartner with him in the sin, becoming sharer with him in the punishment: an instance of great severity, filling all that heard of it with fear and terror, and became a seasonable prevention of that hypocrisy and dissimulation wherewith many might possibly think to have imposed upon the church.

IX. This severe case being extraordinary, the apostles usually exerted their power in such miracles as were more useful and beneficial to the world; curing all manner of diseases, and dispossessing devils:^a insomuch that they brought the sick into the streets, and laid them upon beds and couches, that at least Peter's shadow, as he passed by, might come upon them. These astonishing miracles could not but mightily contribute to the propagation of the gospel, and convince the world that the apostles were more considerable persons than they took them for, poverty and meanness being no bar to true worth and greatness. And, methinks, Erasmus's reflection is here not unseasonable:^a that no honour or sovereignty, no power or dignity, was comparable to this glory of the apostle; that the things of Christ, though in another way, were more noble and excellent than any thing that this world could afford. And therefore he tells us, that when he beheld the state and magnificence wherewith pope Julius the Second appeared first at Bononia, and then at Rome, equalling the triumphs of a Pompey or a Cæsar, he could not but think how much all this was below the greatness and

^a Acts v. 12.

^a Annot. in loc.

majesty of St. Peter, who converted the world, not by power or armies, not by engines or artifices of pomp and grandeur, but by faith in the power of Christ, and drew it to the admiration of himself; and the same state (says he) would no doubt attend the apostles' successors, were they men of the same temper and holiness of life. The Jewish rulers, alarmed with this news, and awakened with the growing numbers of the church, send to apprehend the apostles, and cast them into prison. But God, who is never wanting to his own cause, sent that night an angel from heaven to open the prison doors, commanding them to repair to the temple, and to the exercise of their ministry: which they did early in the morning, and there taught the people. How unsuccessful are the projects of the wisest statesmen, when God frowns upon them! how little do any counsels against heaven prosper! In vain is it to shut the doors, where God is resolved to open them: the firmest bars, the strongest chains, cannot hold, where once God has designed and decreed our liberty. The officers returning the next morning, found the prison shut and guarded, but the prisoners gone: wherewith they acquainted the council, who much wondered at it: but being told where the apostles were, they sent to bring them, without any noise or violence, before the Sanhedrim; where the high-priest asked them, how they durst go on to propagate that doctrine which they had so strictly commanded them not to preach? Peter, in the name of the rest, told them, that they must in this case "obey God rather than men:" that though they had so barbarously and contumeliously treated the Lord Jesus, yet that God had raised him up, and exalted him to be a prince and a Saviour, to give both "repentance and remission of sins:" that they were witnesses of these things, and so were those miraculous powers which the Holy Ghost conferred upon all true Christians. Vexed was the council with this answer, and began to consider how to cut them off. But Gamaliel, a grave and learned senator, having commanded the apostles to withdraw, bade the council take heed what they did to them; putting them in mind, that several persons had heretofore raised parties and factions, and drawn vast numbers after them; but that they had miscarried, and they and their designs come to nought: that therefore they should do well to let these men alone: that if their doctrines and designs were merely human, they would in

time of themselves fall to the ground ; but if they were of God, it was not all their power and policies would be able to defeat and overturn them : and that they themselves would herein appear to oppose the counsels and designs of heaven. With this prudent and rational advice they were satisfied ; and having commanded the apostles to be scourged, and charged them no more to preach this doctrine, restored them to their liberty : who, notwithstanding this charge and threatening, returned home in a kind of triumph, that they were accounted worthy to suffer in so good a cause, and to undergo shame and reproach for the sake of so good a master.^b Nor could all the hard usage they met with from men discourage them in their duty to God, or make them less zealous and diligent both publicly and privately to preach Christ in every place.

SECTION VIII.

OF ST. PETER'S ACTS, FROM THE DISPERSION OF THE CHURCH AT
JERUSALEM TILL HIS CONTEST WITH ST. PAUL AT ANTIOCH.

The great care of the Divine Providence over the church. Peter despatched by the apostles to confirm the church newly planted at Samaria. His baffling and silencing Simon Magus there. His going to Lydda, and curing Æneas. His raising Dorcas at Joppa. The vision of all sorts of creatures presented to him, to prepare him for the conversion of the Gentiles. His going to Cornelius, and declaring God's readiness to receive the Gentiles into the church. The baptizing Cornelius and his family. Peter censured by the Jews for conversing with the Gentiles. The mighty prejudices of the Jews against the Gentiles noted out of heathen writers. Peter cast into prison by Herod Agrippa : miraculously delivered by an angel. His discourse in the synod at Jerusalem, that the Gentiles might be received without being put under the obligation of the law of Moses. His unworthy compliance with the Jews at Antioch, in opposition to the Gentiles, severely checked and resisted by St. Paul. The ill use Porphyry makes of this difference. The conceit of some that it was not Peter the apostle, but one of the Seventy.

THE church had been hitherto tossed with gentle storms, but now a more violent tempest overtook it, which began in the protomartyr Stephen,^c and was more vigorously carried on afterwards ; by occasion whereof the disciples were dispersed : and God, who always brings good out of evil, hereby provided that the gospel should not be confined only to Jerusalem.

^b Vid. Arrian, dissert. l. i. c. 29.

^c Acts viii. 1.

Hitherto the church had been crowded up within the city walls, and the religion had crept up and down in private corners; but the professors of it being now dispersed abroad by the malice and cruelty of their enemies, carried Christianity along with them, and propagated it into the neighbour countries, accomplishing hereby an ancient prophecy,^d that "out of Sion should go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Thus God overrules the malice of men, and makes intended poison to become food or physic. That Divine Providence that governs the world, more particularly superintends the affairs and interests of his church, so that no weapon formed against Israel shall prosper; curses shall be turned into blessings, and that become an eminent means to enlarge and propagate the gospel, which they designed as the only way to suppress and stifle it. Amongst those that were scattered, Philip the deacon was driven down unto Samaria; where he preached the gospel, and confirmed his preaching by many miraculous cures, and dispossessing devils. In this city there was one Simon, who, by magic arts and diabolical sorceries sought to advance himself into a great fame and reputation with the people, insomuch that they generally beheld him as the great power of God; for so the ancients tell us,^e he used to style himself, giving out himself to be the first and chiefest deity, the Father, who is God over all; that is, that he was that which in every nation was accounted the supreme deity. This man hearing the sermons, and beholding the miracles that were done by Philip, gave up himself amongst the number of believers, and was baptized with them. The apostles, who yet remained at Jerusalem, having heard of the great success of Philip's ministry at Samaria, thought good to send some of their number to his assistance; and accordingly deputed Peter and John, who came thither: where having prayed for, and laid their hands upon these new converts, they presently received the Holy Ghost. Simon the magician, observing that by laying on of the apostles' hands miraculous gifts were conferred upon men, offered them a considerable sum of money to invest him with this power, that on whom he laid his hands they might receive the Holy Ghost. Peter perceiving his rotten and insincere intentions, rejected his

^d Isai. ii. 3.

^e Just. Mart. Apol. i. s. 11. Iren. l. i. c. 20. Tertull. de præscript. Hæret. c. 46.

impious motion with scorn and detestation: "thy money perish with thee." He told him that his heart was naught and hypocritical; that he could have no share nor portion in so great a privilege; that it more concerned him to repent of so great a wickedness, and sincerely seek to God, that so the thought of his heart might be forgiven him; for that he perceived that he had a very vicious and corrupt temper and constitution of mind, and was as yet bound up under a very wretched and miserable state, displeasing to God, and dangerous to himself. The conscience of the man was a little startled with this, and he prayed the apostles to intercede with heaven, that God would pardon his sin, and that none of these things might fall upon him. But how little cure this wrought upon him, we shall find elsewhere, when we shall again meet with him afterwards. The apostles having thus confirmed the church at Samaria, and preached up and down in the villages thereabouts, returned back to Jerusalem, to join their counsel and assistance to the rest of the apostles.

II. The storm, though violent, being at length blown over, the church enjoyed a time of great calmness and serenity; during which Peter went out to visit the churches lately planted in those parts by those disciples who had been dispersed by the persecution at Jerusalem. Coming down to Lydda, the first thing he did was to work a cure upon one *Æneas*,^f who being crippled with the palsy, had lain bed-ridden for eight years together. Peter coming to him, bade him, in the name of Christ, to arise; and the man was immediately restored to perfect health: a miracle that was not confined only to his person, for, being known abroad, generally brought over the inhabitants of that place. The fame of this miracle having flown to Joppa, a sea-port town, some six miles thence, the Christians there presently sent for Peter upon this occasion. *Tabitha*, whose Greek name was *Dorcas*, a woman venerable for her piety and diffusive charity, was newly dead, to the great lamentation of all good men, and much more to the loss of the poor that had been relieved by her. Peter, coming to the house, found her dressed up for her funeral solemnity, and compassed about with the sorrowful widows, who shewed the coats and garments wherewith she had clothed them, the badges of her charitable

^f Acts ix. 32.

liberality. Peter, shutting all out, kneeled down and prayed, and then turning him to the body, commanded her to arise; and lifting her up by the hand, presented her in perfect health to her friends, and those that were about her: by which he confirmed many, and converted more to the faith: after which he stayed some considerable time at Joppa, lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner.

III. While he abode in this city,^s retiring one morning to the house-top to pray, (as the Jews frequently did, having thence a free and open prospect towards Jerusalem and the temple,) it being now near noon, which was the conclusion of one of their stated times of prayer, he found himself hungry, and called for meat; but while it was preparing, he himself fell into a trance, wherein was presented to him a large sheet let down from heaven, containing all sorts of creatures, clean and unclean; a voice at the same time calling to him, that he should rise, kill freely, and indifferently feed upon them. Peter, tenacious as yet of the rites and institutions of the Mosaic law, rejoined, that he could not do it, having never eaten any thing that was common or unclean: to which the voice replied, that what God had cleansed he should not account or call common: which being done thrice, the vessel was again taken up into heaven, and the vision presently disappeared. By this symbolic representment, though Peter at present knew not what to make of it, God was teaching him a new lesson, and preparing him to go upon an errand and embassy, which the Spirit at the same time expressly commanded him to undertake. While he was in this doubtful posture of mind, three messengers knocked at the door, inquiring for him, from whom he received this account: that Cornelius, a Roman, captain of a band of Italian soldiers at Cæsarea, a person of great piety and religion, (being a proselyte at the gate, who, though not observing an exact conformity to the rites of the Mosaic law, did yet maintain some general correspondence with it, and lived under the obligation of the seven precepts of the sons of Noah,) had by an immediate command from God sent for him. The next day, Peter, accompanied with some of the brethren, went along with them, and the day after they came to Cæsarea: against whose arrival Cornelius had summoned his friends and kindred to his house. Peter arriving, Cornelius

^s Acts x. 9.

(who was affected with a mighty reverence for so great a person) fell at his feet and worshipped him ; a way of address frequent in those eastern countries towards princes and great men, but by the Greeks and Romans appropriated as a peculiar honour to the gods. Peter, rejecting the honour, as due only to God, entered into the house ; where he first made his apology to the company, that though they could not but know that it was not lawful for a Jew to converse in the duties of religion with those of another nation, yet that now God had taught him another lesson ; and then proceeded particularly to inquire the reason of Cornelius's sending for him. Whereupon Cornelius told him, that four days since, being conversant in the duties of fasting and prayer, an angel had appeared to him, and told him that his prayers and alms were come up for a memorial before God ; that he should send to Joppa for one Simon Peter, who lodged in a tanner's house by the sea-side, who should farther make known his mind to him : that accordingly he had sent ; and being now come, they were there met to hear what he had to say to them. Where we see, that though God sent an angel to Cornelius, to acquaint him with his will, yet the angel was only to direct him to the apostle for instruction in the faith : which no doubt was done, partly that God might put the greater honour upon an institution, that was likely to meet with contempt and scorn enough from the world ; partly to let us see, that we are not to expect extraordinary and miraculous ways of teaching and information, where God affords ordinary means.

IV. Hereupon Peter began this discourse : that by comparing things, it was now plain and evident, that the partition-wall was broken down ; that God had no longer a particular kindness for nations or persons ; that it was not the nation, but the religion ; not the outward quality of the man, but the inward temper of the mind, that recommends men to God ; that the devout and the pious, the righteous and the good man, wherever he be, is equally dear to heaven ;^b that God has as much respect for a just and virtuous man in the wilds of Scythia, as upon Mount Sion ; that the reconciling and making peace between God and man by Jesus Christ, was the doctrine published by the prophets of old, and of late, since the times of John, preached through Galilee and Judea, viz. that God had anointed and con-

^b Vid. Hieron. ad Paulin. p. 102. tom. i.

secrated Jesus of Nazareth with divine powers and graces, in the exercise whereof he constantly went about to do good to men : that they had seen all he had done amongst the Jews, whom though they had slain and crucified, yet that God had raised him again the third day, and had openly shewed him to his apostles and followers, whom he had chosen to be his peculiar witnesses, and whom, to that end, he had admitted to eat and drink with him after his resurrection, commanding them to preach the gospel to mankind, and to testify that he was the person whom God had ordained to be the great judge of the world : that all the prophets, with one consent, bore witness of him : that this Jesus is he, in whose name whosoever believes, should certainly receive remission of sins. While Peter was thus preaching to them, the Holy Ghost fell upon a great part of his auditory, enabling them to speak several languages, and therein to magnify the giver of them : whereat the Jews who came along with Peter did sufficiently wonder, to see that the gifts of the Holy Ghost should be poured upon the Gentiles. Peter seeing this, told the company, that he knew no reason why these persons should not be baptized, having received the Holy Ghost as well as they ; and accordingly commanded them to be baptized : for whose farther confirmation he stayed some time longer with them. This act of Peter's made a great noise among the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem, who, being lately converted from their Judaism, were as yet zealous for the religion of their country, and therefore severely charged Peter, at his return, for his too familiar conversing with the Gentiles.¹ See here the powerful prejudice of education. The Jews had, for several ages, conceived a radicated and inveterate hatred against the Gentiles : indeed, the law of Moses commanded them to be peculiarly kind to their own nation ; and the rites and institutions of their religion, and the peculiar form of their commonwealth, made them different from the fashion of other countries : a separation which in after times they drew into a narrower compass. Besides, they were mightily puffed up with their external privileges, that they were the seed of Abraham, the people whom God had peculiarly chosen for himself, above all other nations of the world, and therefore, with a lofty scorn, proudly rejected the Gentiles as dogs and reprobates, utterly refusing to shew them any office of common kindness and

¹ Acts xi. 1.

converse. We find the heathens frequently charging them with this rudeness and inhumanity. Juvenal accuses them,^k that they would not shew a traveller the right way, nor give him a draught of water, if he were not of their religion. Tacitus tells us,^l that they had *adversus omnes alios hostile odium*, "a bitter hatred of all other people." Haman represented them to Ahasuerus,^m as ἔθνος ἄμικτον, ἀσύμφυλον, &c.; "a people that would never kindly mix and correspond with any other, as different in their manners as in their laws and religion from other nations." The friends of Antiochus (as the historian reportsⁿ) charged them, μόνους ἀπάντων ἐθνῶν ἀκοινωνήτους εἶναι τῆς πρὸς ἄλλο ἔθνος ἐπιμιξίας, καὶ πολεμίους ὑπολαμβάνειν πάντας, μηδενὶ ἄλλῳ ἔθνει τραπέξης κοινωνεῖν τὸ παράπαν, μηδὲ εὐνοεῖν, "that they alone, of all others, were the most unsociable people under heaven: that they held no converse or correspondence with any other, but accounted them as their mortal enemies; that they would not eat or drink with men of another nation, no, nor so much as wish well to them, their ancestors having leavened them with a hatred of all mankind." This was their humour; and that the Gentiles herein did not wrong them, is sufficiently evident from their ordinary practice, and is openly avowed by their own writings:^o nay, at their first coming over to Christianity, though one great design of it was to soften the manners of men, and to oblige them to a more extensive and universal charity, yet could they hardly quit this common prejudice, quarrelling with Peter for no other reason but that he had eaten and drunken with the Gentiles; insomuch that he was forced to apologize for himself, and to justify his actions, as immediately done by divine warrant and authority. And then, no sooner had he given them a naked and impartial account of the whole transaction, from first to last, but they presently turned their displeasure against him into thanks to God, that had granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life.

V. It was now about the end of Caligula's reign, when Peter, having finished his visitation of the new-planted churches, was returned unto Jerusalem. Not long after, Herod Agrippa, grandchild to Herod the Great, having attained the kingdom, the

^k Satyr. xiv. 103, 4. ^l Hist. l. v. c. 4, 5. ^m Ap. Joseph. Ant. Jud. l. xi. c. 6.

ⁿ Diod. Sicul. l. xxxiv. apud Phot. Cod. CCXLIV. col. 1149.

^o Vid. Maiman. in מלכות cap. 12. et in Gezelah. cap. 11.

better to ingratiate himself with the people, had lately put St. James to death;^p and finding that this gratified the vulgar, resolved to send Peter the same way after him. In order whereunto he apprehended him, cast him into prison, and set strong guards to watch him: the church in the mean time being very instant and importunate with heaven for his life and safety. The night before his intended execution, God purposely sent an angel from heaven, who coming to the prison, found him fast asleep between two of his keepers: so soft and secure a pillow is a good conscience, even in the confines of death, and the greatest danger. The angel raised him up, knocked off his chains, bade him gird on his garments, and follow him. He did so; and having passed the first and second watch, and entered through the iron-gate into the city, (which opened to them of its own accord,) after having passed through one street more, the angel departed from him. By this time Peter came to himself, and perceived that it was no vision, but a reality that had happened to him. Whereupon he came to Mary's house, where the church were met together at prayer for him. Knocking at the door, the maid, who came to let him in, perceiving it was his voice, ran back to tell them that Peter was at the door: which they at first looked upon as nothing but the effect of fright or fancy; but she still affirming it, they concluded that it was his angel, or some peculiar messenger sent from him. The door being open, they were strangely amazed at the sight of him: but he briefly told them the manner of his deliverance, and charging them to acquaint the brethren with it, presently withdrew into another place. It is easy to imagine what a bustle and stir there was the next morning among the keepers of the prison, with whom Herod was so much displeased, that he commanded them to be put to death.

VI. Some time after this, it happened that a controversy arising between the Jewish and the Gentile converts,^q about the observation of the Mosaic law, the minds of men were exceedingly disquieted and disturbed with it; the Jews zealously contending for circumcision, and the observance of the ceremonial law to be joined with the belief and profession of the gospel, as equally necessary to salvation. To compose this difference, the best expedient that could be thought on was to call a general

^p Acts xii. 1.

^q Acts xv. 1.

council of the apostles and brethren to meet together at Jerusalem, which was done accordingly, and the case thoroughly scanned and canvassed. At last Peter stood up, and acquainted the synod, that God having made choice of him, among all the apostles, to be the first that preached the gospel to the Gentiles; God, who was best able to judge of the hearts of men, had borne witness to them, that they were accepted of him, by giving them his Holy Spirit as well as he had done to the Jews; having put no difference between the one and the other. That therefore it was a tempting and a provoking God, to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither they themselves nor their fathers were able to bear: there being ground enough to believe, that the Gentiles as well as the Jews should be saved by the grace of the gospel. After some other of the apostles had declared their judgments in the case, it was unanimously decreed, that except the temporary observance of some few particular things, equally convenient both for Jew and Gentile, no other burthen should be imposed upon them. And so the decrees of the council being drawn up into a synodical epistle, were sent abroad to the several churches, for allaying the heats and controversies that had been raised about this matter.

VII. Peter, a while after the celebration of this council, left Jerusalem, and came down to Antioch,^r where, using the liberty which the gospel had given him, he familiarly ate and conversed with the Gentile converts, accounting them, now that the "partition-wall was broken down," no longer strangers and foreigners, "but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God:" this he had been taught by the vision of the sheet let down from heaven; this had been lately decreed, and he himself had promoted and subscribed it in the synod at Jerusalem; this he had before practised towards Cornelius and his family, and justified the action to the satisfaction of his accusers; and this he had here freely and innocently done at Antioch, till some of the Jewish brethren coming thither, for fear of offending and displeasing them, he withdrew his converse with the Gentiles, as if it had been unlawful for him to hold communion with uncircumcised persons, when yet he knew, and was fully satisfied, that our Lord had wholly removed all difference, and broken down the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile. In which affair, as he himself acted against the light of his own

^r Gal. ii. 11.

mind and judgment, condemning what he had approved, and destroying what he had before built up, so hereby he confirmed the Jewish zealots in their inveterate error, cast infinite scruples into the minds of the Gentiles, filling their consciences with fears and dissatisfactions, reviving the old feuds and prejudices between Jew and Gentile; by which means many others were ensnared; yea, the whole number of Jewish converts followed his example, separating themselves from the company of the Gentile Christians. Yea, so far did it spread, that Barnabas himself was carried away with the stream and torrent of this unwarrantable practice. St. Paul, who was at this time come to Antioch, unto whom Peter gave the "right hand of fellowship," acknowledging his apostleship of the circumcision, observing these evil and unevangelical actings, resolutely withstood Peter to the face, and publicly reprov'd him as a person worthy to be blamed for his gross prevarication in this matter; severely expostulating and reasoning with him, that he who was himself a Jew, and thereby under a more immediate obligation to the Mosaic law, should cast off that yoke himself, and yet endeavour to impose it upon the Gentiles, who were not in the least under any obligation to it: a smart, but an impartial charge; and indeed so remarkable was this carriage of St. Paul towards our apostle, that though it set things right for the present, yet it made some noise abroad in the world. Yea, Porphyry himself,* that acute and subtle enemy of Christianity, makes use of it as an argument against them both: charging the one with error and falsehood, and the other with rudeness and incivility; and that the whole was but a compact of forgery and deceit, while the princes of the church did thus fall out among themselves. And so sensible were some of this in the first ages of Christianity, that rather than such a dishonour and disgrace, as they accounted it, should be reflected upon Peter, they tell us of two several Cephases,[†] one the apostle, the other one of the seventy disciples; and that it was the last of these that was guilty of this prevarication, and whom St. Paul so vigorously resisted and reprov'd at Antioch. But for this plausible and well-meant evasion the champions of the Romish church conn them no great thanks at this day. Nay, St. Jerome long since fully confuted it in his notes upon this place.

* Apud Hieron. proem. in Ep. ad Gal.

† Hieron. Com. in Gal. ii.

SECTION IX.

OF ST. PETER'S ACTS, FROM THE END OF THE SACRED STORY TILL
HIS MARTYRDOM.

Peter's story prosecuted out of ecclesiastical writers. His planting of a church and an episcopal see at Antioch, when said to be. His first journey to Rome, and the happiness it brought to the Roman empire. His preaching in other places, and return to Rome. His encounter with Simon Magus. The impostures of the magician. His familiarity with the emperors, and the great honours said to be done to him. His statue and inscription at Rome. Peter's victory over him by raising one from the dead. Simon attempting to fly, is by Peter's prayers hindered, falls down, and dies. Nero's displeasure against Peter, whence. His being cast into prison. His flight thence, and being brought back by Christ appearing to him. Crucified with his head downwards, and why. The place of his martyrdom and burial. The original and greatness of St. Peter's church in Rome. His episcopal chair pretended to be still kept there.

HITHERTO, in drawing up the life of this great apostle, we have had an infallible guide to conduct and lead us : but the sacred story breaking off here, forces us to look abroad, and to pick up what memoir the ancients have left us in this matter : which we shall for the main digest according to the order, wherein Baronius and other ecclesiastical writers have disposed the series of St. Peter's life ; reserving what is justly questionable, to a more particular examination afterward. And that we may present the account more entire and perfect, we must step back a little in point of time, that so we may go forward with greater advantage. We are to know, therefore, that during the time of peace and calmness which the church enjoyed after Saul's persecution, when St. Peter went down to visit the churches, he is said to have gone to Antioch, where great numbers of Jews inhabited, and there to have planted the Christian faith. That he founded a church here, Eusebius expressly tells us ;^u and by others it is said,^x that he himself was the first bishop of this see. Sure I am that St. Chrysostom^y reckons it one of the greatest honours of that city that St. Peter stayed so long there, and that the bishops of it succeeded him in that see. The care and pre-cedency of the church he had between six and seven years. Not that he stayed there all that time, but that having ordered and

^u Chron. ad Ann. Chr. 43.

^x Hieron. Comment. in ii. ad Galat.

^y Encom. S. Ignat. Mart. p. 503. tom. i.

disposed things to the best advantage, he returned to other affairs and exigencies of the church: confirming the new plantations, bringing in Cornelius and his family, and in him the first-fruits of the Gentiles' conversion to the faith of Christ: after which he returned unto Jerusalem, where he was imprisoned by Herod, and miraculously delivered by an angel sent from heaven.

II. What became of Peter after his deliverance out of prison is not certainly known: probably he might preach in some parts a little farther distant from Judea, as we are told he did at Byzantium,^z and in the countries thereabout; (though, I confess, the evidence to me is not convincing.) After this, he resolved upon a journey to Rome; where most agree he arrived about the second year of the emperor Claudius. Orosius tells us,^a that coming to Rome, he brought prosperity along with him to that city: for besides several other extraordinary advantages which at that time happened to it, this was not the least observable, that Camillus Scribonianus, governor of Dalmatia, soliciting the army to rebel against the emperor, the eagles, their military standard, remained so fast in the ground, that no power nor strength was able to pluck them up: with which unusual accident the minds of the soldiers were surprised and startled, and turning their swords against the author of the sedition, continued firm and loyal in their obedience: whereby a dangerous rebellion was prevented, likely enough otherwise to have broken out. This he ascribes to St. Peter's coming to Rome, and the first plantation of the Christian faith in that city: heaven beginning more particularly to smile upon that place at his first coming thither. It is not to be doubted, but that at his first arrival, he disposed himself amongst the Jews, his countrymen, who, ever since the time of Augustus, had dwelt in the region beyond Tiber. But when afterwards he began to preach to the Gentiles, he was forced to change his lodging, and was taken in by one Pudens, a senator, lately converted to the faith. Here he closely plied his main office and employment to establish Christianity in that place. Here, we are told,^b he met with Philo the Jew, lately come on his second embassy unto Rome, in the behalf of his

^z Bar. ad Ann. Chr. 44. num. 12. Vid. Epist. Agap. ad Petr. Hieros. in v. Synod. sub Men. Conc.

^a Hist. l. vii. c. 6.

^b Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 17. Hieron. de script. Eccl. in Phil.

countrymen at Alexandria, and to have contracted an intimate friendship and acquaintance with him. And now it was, says Baronius,^c that Peter being mindful of the churches which he had founded in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Bithynia, and Asia the Less, wrote his first epistle to them, which he probably infers hence, that St. Mark being yet with him at the time of the date of this epistle, it must be written at least some time this year, for that now it was that St. Mark was sent to preach and propagate the faith in Egypt. Next to the planting religion at Rome, he took care to propagate it in the western parts. And to that end, (if we may believe one of those that pretend to be his successors,^d) he sent abroad disciples into several provinces, that so "their sound might go into all the earth, and their words into the ends of the world."

III. It happened that after St. Peter had been several years at Rome, Claudius, the emperor, taking advantage of some seditions and tumults raised by the Jews, by a public edict banished them out of Rome.^e In the number of whom, St. Peter (they say) departed thence, and returned back to Jerusalem, where he was present at that great apostolical synod, of which before. After this we are left under great uncertainties how he disposed of himself for many years. Confident we may be, that he was not idle, but spent his time sometimes in preaching in the eastern parts, sometimes in other parts of the world, as in Africa, Sicily, Italy, and other places.^f And here it may not be amiss to insert a claim in behalf of our own country: Eusebius telling us (as Metaphrastes reports it^g) that Peter was not only in these western parts, but particularly that he was a long time in Britain, where he converted many nations to the faith. But we had better be without the honour of St. Peter's company, than build the story upon so sandy a foundation: Metaphrastes's authority being of so little value in this case, that it is slighted by the more learned and moderate writers of the church of Rome. But wherever it was that St. Peter employed his time, towards the latter part of Nero's reign he returned to Rome; where he found the minds of the people strangely bewitched and hardened against the embracing of the Christian religion by the subtleties and

^c Ad Ann. 45. num. 16.

^d Innoc. Ep. i. ad Dec. Eug.

^e Vid. Oroa. l. vii. c. 6.

^f Vid. Innoc. Epist. ubi supra.

^g De Petr. et Paul. ad diem 29 Jun. num. 23. Vid. etiam n. 10. ibid.

magic arts of Simon Magus, whom (as we have before related) he had formerly baffled at Samaria. This Simon was born at Gitton, a village of Samaria,^b bred up in the arts of sorcery and divination, and by the help of the diabolical powers performed many strange feats of wonder and activity, insomuch that people generally looked upon him as some great deity come down from heaven: but being discovered and confounded by Peter at Samaria, he left the East and fled to Rome; where, by witchcraft and sorceries, he insinuated himself into the favour of the people, and at last became very acceptable to the emperors themselves, insomuch that no honour and veneration was too great for him. Justin Martyr assures us,ⁱ that he was honoured as a deity; that a statue was erected to him in the Insula Tyberina, between two bridges, with this inscription, SIMONI DEO SANCTO; "To Simon, the holy God:" that the Samaritans generally, and very many of other nations, did own and worship him as the chief principal deity. I know the credit of this inscription is shrewdly shaken by some later antiquaries, who tell us, that the good father being a Greek, might easily mistake in a Latin inscription, or be imposed upon by others; and that the true inscription was SIMONI SANGO DEO FIDIO, &c., such an inscription being in the last age dug up in the Tyberine island, and there preserved to this day. It is not impossible but this might be the foundation of the story; but sure I am, that it is not only reported by the Martyr, who was himself a Samaritan, and lived but in the next age, but by others almost of the same time, Irenæus,^k Tertullian,^l and by others after them.^m It farther deserves to be considered, that Justin Martyr was a person of great learning and gravity, inquisitive about matters of this nature; at this time at Rome, where he was capable fully to satisfy himself in the truth of things; that he presented this apology to the emperor and the senate of Rome, to whom he would be careful what he said; and who, as they knew whether it was true or no, so, if false, could not but ill resent to be so boldly imposed upon by so notorious a fable: but, be it as it will, he was highly in favour both with the people and their emperors, especially Nero, who was the great patron of magicians, and all who maintained secret ways

^b J. Mart. Apol. ii. p. 69—91. Vid. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 349.

ⁱ Ubi supra, Apol. ii. ^k Iren. adv. Hær. l. i. c. 20. p. 115. ^l Tertull. Apol. c. 13.

^m Euseb. l. ii. c. 14. Aug. de Hæres. in Simon. tom. vi. col. 13. Niceph. l. ii. c. 14.

of commerce with the infernal powers.ⁿ With him St. Peter thought fit in the first place to encounter,^o and to undeceive the people, by discovering the impostures and delusions of that wretched man.

IV. That he did so, is generally affirmed by the ancient fathers,^p who tell us of some particular instances, wherein he baffled and confounded him. But because the matter is more entirely drawn up by Hegesippus^q the younger, an author contemporary with St. Ambrose, if not (which is most probable) St. Ambrose himself, we shall from him represent the summary of the story. There was at this time at Rome an eminent young gentleman, and a kinsman of the emperor's, lately dead. The fame which Peter had for raising persons to life, persuaded his friends that he might be called: others also prevailing that Simon the magician might be sent for. Simon, glad of the occasion to magnify himself before the people, propounded to Peter, that if he raised the gentleman unto life, then Peter, who had so injuriously provoked the "great power of God," (as he styled himself,) should lose his life: but if Peter prevailed, he himself would submit to the same fate and sentence. Peter accepted the terms, and Simon began his charms and enchantments; whereat the dead gentleman seemed to move his hand. The people that stood by, presently cried out, that he was alive, and that he talked with Simon, and began to fall foul upon Peter, for daring to oppose himself against so great a power. The apostle entreated their patience; told them that all this was but a phantasm and appearance; that if Simon was but taken from the bed-side, all this pageantry would quickly vanish: who being accordingly removed, the body remained without the least sign of motion. Peter, standing at a good distance from the bed, silently made his address to heaven, and then before them all commanded the young gentleman, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to arise: who immediately did so, spoke, walked, and ate, and was by Peter restored to his mother. The people who saw this, suddenly changed their opinions, and fell upon the magician with an intent to stone him: but Peter begged his life; and

ⁿ Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. xxx. c. 2.

^o Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 14.

^p Damasc. in vit. Petr. Conc. vol. i. Const. Apost. l. vi. c. 8, 9. Arnob. adv. Gent. l. ii. p. 23. Epiph. Hæres. xxi. c. 1. Sulp. Sev. l. ii. p. 137. et alii.

^q Heges. de Excid. Hieros. l. iii. c. 2.

told them, that it would be a sufficient punishment to him to live and see that, in despite of all his power and malice, the kingdom of Christ should increase and flourish. The magician was inwardly tormented with this defeat, and vexed to see the triumph of the apostle; and therefore mustering up all his powers, summoned the people, told them that he was offended at the Galileans, whose protector and guardian he had been, and therefore set them a day, when he promised that they should see him fly up into heaven. At the time appointed he went up to the mount of the capitol, and throwing himself from the top of the rock, began his flight: a sight which the people entertained with great wonder and veneration, affirming that this must be the power of God, and not of man. Peter, standing in the crowd, prayed to our Lord, that the people might be undeceived, and that the vanity of the impostor might be discovered in such a way that he himself might be sensible of it. Immediately the wings which he had made himself began to fail him, and he fell to the ground, miserably bruised and wounded with the fall: whence being carried into a neighbouring village, he soon after died. This is the story, for the particular circumstances whereof the reader must rely upon the credit of my author, the thing in general being sufficiently acknowledged by most ancient writers. This contest of Peter's with Simon Magus is placed by Eusebius under the reign of Claudius, but by the generality both of ancient and later authors, it is referred to the reign of Nero.

V. Such was the end of this miserable and unhappy man: which no sooner came to the ears of the emperor, to whom by wicked artifices he had endeared himself, but it became an occasion of hastening Peter's ruin. The emperor probably had been before displeased with Peter, not only upon the account of the general disagreement and inconformity of his religion, but because he had so strictly pressed temperance and chastity,^r and reclaimed so many women in Rome from a dissolute and vicious life, thereby crossing that wanton and lascivious temper, to which that prince was so immoderate a slave and vassal. And being now by his means robbed of his dear favourite and companion, he resolved upon revenge, commanded Peter (as also St. Paul, who was at this time at Rome) to be apprehended, and cast into the Mamertine prison: where they spent their time in the

^r Vid. Ambr. Orat. in Auxent. Ep. l. v. p. 125. tom. iii.

exercises of religion,^s and especially in preaching to the prisoners, and those who resorted to them. And here we may suppose it was (if not a little before) that Peter wrote his second epistle to the dispersed Jews, wherein he endeavours to confirm them in the belief and practice of Christianity, and to fortify them against those poisonous and pernicious principles and practices which even then began to break in upon the Christian church.

VI. Nero returning from Achaia, and entering Rome with a great deal of pomp and triumph, resolved now the apostles should fall as a victim and sacrifice to his cruelty and revenge. While the fatal stroke was daily expected, the Christians in Rome did by daily prayers and importunities solicit St. Peter to make an escape,^t and to reserve himself to the uses and services of the church. This at first he rejected, as what would ill reflect upon his courage and constancy, and argue him to be afraid of those sufferings for Christ to which he himself had so often persuaded others; but the prayers and tears of the people overcame him, and made him yield. Accordingly, the next night, having prayed with and taken his farewell of the brethren, he got over the prison wall; and coming to the city gate, he is there said to have met with our Lord, who was just entering into the city. Peter asked him, "Lord, whither art thou going?" from whom he presently received this answer, "I am come to Rome, to be crucified a second time." By which answer Peter apprehended himself to be reprov'd, and that our Lord meant it of his death, that he was to be crucified in his servant. Whereupon he went back to the prison, and delivered himself into the hands of his keepers, shewing himself most ready and cheerful to acquiesce in the will of God. And we are told,^u that in the stone whereon our Lord stood while he talked with Peter, he left the impression of his feet; which stone has been ever since preserved as a very sacred relic, and after several translations was at length fixed in the church of St. Sebastian the martyr, where it is kept and visited with great expressions of reverence and devotion at this day. Before his suffering he was, no question, scourged, according to the manner of the Romans, who were wont first to whip those malefactors who were adjudged

^s Vid. Martyr. Rom. ad diem 14 Mart. p. 165.

^t Vid. Ambr. ut supra et Heges. de excid. Hieros. l. iii. c. 2.

^u Rom. Subteran. l. iii. c. 21. n. 15.

to the most severe and capital punishments. Having saluted his brethren, and especially having taken his last farewell of St. Paul, he was brought out of the prison, and led to the top of the Vatican mount, near to Tiber, the place designed for his execution. The death he was adjudged to was crucifixion, as of all others accounted the most shameful, so the most severe and terrible. But he entreated the favour of the officers, that he might not be crucified in the ordinary way, but might suffer with his head downwards,* and his feet up to heaven, affirming that he was unworthy to suffer in the same posture wherein his Lord had suffered before him. Happy man, (as Chrysostom glosses,†) to be set in the readiest posture of travelling from earth to heaven. His body being taken from the cross, is said to have been embalmed by Marcellinus, the presbyter, after the Jewish manner, and was then buried in the Vatican, near the Triumphal Way. Over his grave a small church was soon after erected;‡ which being destroyed by Heliogabalus, his body was removed to the cemetery in the Appian Way, two miles from Rome; where it remained till the time of pope Cornelius, who reconveyed it to the Vatican, where it rested somewhat obscurely until the reign of Constantine: who, out of the mighty reverence which he had for the Christian religion, caused many churches to be built at Rome, but especially rebuilt and enlarged the Vatican to the honour of St. Peter; in the doing whereof himself is said to have been the first that began to dig the foundation, and to have carried thence twelve baskets of rubbish with his own hands, in honour, as it should seem, of the twelve apostles. He infinitely enriched the church with gifts and ornaments, which in every age increased in splendour and riches, till it is become one of the wonders of the world at this day. Of whose glories, stateliness, and beauty, and those many venerable monuments of antiquity that are in it, they who desire to know more, may be plentifully satisfied by Onuphrius.⁴ Only one amongst the rest must not be forgotten: there being kept that very wooden chair wherein St. Peter sat when he was at Rome,

* Orig. l. iii. in Genes. apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 1. Hieron. de Script. Eccl. in Petr. Heges. de excid. Hieros. l. iii. c. 2. Prudent. Peristeph. Hymn. xi. in Pass. Pet. et Paul.

† Serm. in Petr. et Paul. p. 267. tom. vi.

‡ Vid. Onuphr. de vii. Urb. Basil. c. 4.

⁴ Loc. supra laudat.

by the only touching whereof many miracles are said to be performed. But, surely, Baronius's wisdom and gravity were from home,^b when, speaking of this chair, and fearing that heretics would imagine that it might be rotten in so long a time, he tells us, that it is no wonder that this chair should be preserved so long, when Eusebius affirms, that the wooden chair of St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, was extant in the time of Constantine. But the cardinal, it seems, forgot to consider, that there is some difference between three and sixteen hundred years. But of this enough. St. Peter was crucified, according to the common computation, in the year of Christ sixty-nine, and the thirteenth (or, as Eusebius, the fourteenth) of Nero; how truly may be inquired afterwards.

SECTION X.

THE CHARACTER OF HIS PERSON AND TEMPER, AND AN ACCOUNT OF HIS WRITINGS.

The description of St. Peter's person. An account of his temper. A natural fervour and eagerness predominant in him. Fierceness and animosity peculiarly remarkable in the Galileans. The abatements of his zeal and courage. His humility and lowliness of mind. His great love to, and zeal for Christ. His constancy and resolution in confessing of Christ. His faithfulness and diligence in his office. His writings, genuine and supposititious. His first epistle, what the design of it. What meant by Babylon, whence it was dated. His second epistle a long time questioned, and why. Difference in the style, no considerable objection. Grotius's conceit of its being written by Symeon, bishop of Jerusalem, exploded. A concurrence of circumstances to entitle St. Peter to it. Some things in it referred to, which he had preached at Rome, particularly the destruction of Jerusalem, written but a little before his death. The spurious writings attributed to him, mentioned by the ancients. His Acts. Gospel. *Petri Prædicatio*. His Apocalypse. *Judicium Petri*. Peter's married relation. His wife the companion of his travels. Her martyrdom. His daughter Petronilla.

HAVING run through the current history of St. Peter's life, it may not be amiss in the next place to survey a little his person and temper. His body (if we may believe the description given of him by Nicephorus^c) was somewhat slender, of a middle size, but rather inclining to tallness; his complexion very pale, and almost white: the hair of his head and beard curled and thick,

^b Ad Ann. 45. num. 11.

^c Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 37.

but withal short; though St. Jerome tells us,^d out of Clemens's Periods, that he was bald, which probably might be in his declining age; his eyes black, but specked with red, which Baronius will have to proceed from his frequent weeping;^e his eye-brows thin, or none at all; his nose long, but rather broad and flat than sharp: such was the case and outside. Let us next look inwards, and view the jewel that was within. Take him as a man, and there seems to have been a natural eagerness predominant in his temper, which as a whetstone sharpened his soul for all bold and generous undertakings. It was this in a great measure that made him so forward to speak, and to return answers, sometimes before he had well considered them.^f It was this made him expose his person to the most eminent dangers, promise those great things in behalf of his Master, and resolutely draw his sword in his quarrel against a whole band of soldiers, and wound the high-priest's servant; and possibly he had attempted greater matters, had not our Lord restrained, and taken him off by that seasonable check that he gave him.

II. This temper he owed in a great measure to the genius and nature of his country, of which Josephus gives this true character:^g that it naturally bred in men a certain fierceness and animosity, whereby they were fearlessly carried out upon any action, and in all things shewed a great strength and courage both of mind and body. The Galileans (says he) being fighters from their childhood, the men being as seldom overtaken with cowardice as their country with want of men. And yet, notwithstanding this, his fervour and fierceness had its intervals; there being some times when the paroxysms of his heat and courage did intermit, and the man was surprised and betrayed by his own fears. Witness his passionate crying out, when he was upon the sea in danger of his life, and his fearful deserting his Master in the garden; but especially his carriage in the high-priest's hall, when the confident charge of a sorry maid made him sink so far beneath himself, and, notwithstanding his great and resolute promises, so shamefully deny his Master, and that with curses and imprecations. But he was in danger, and passion prevailed over his understanding, and "fear betrayed the

^d Com. in Gal. ii. p. 164. vol. ix. ex lib. dicto, Πράξεις, seu Περίοδοι Πέτρον.

^e Ad Ann. 69. n. 31.

^f Chrysost. Hom. xxxii. in Joan. p. 170.

^g De Bello Jud. l. iii. c. 4.

succours which reason offered ;” and, being intent upon nothing but the present safety of his life, he heeded not what he did, when he disowned his Master, to save himself ; so dangerous is it to be left to ourselves, and to have our natural passions let loose upon us.

III. Consider him as a disciple and a Christian, and we shall find him exemplary in the great instances of religion. Singular his humility and lowliness of mind. With what a passionate earnestness, upon the conviction of a miracle, did he beg of our Saviour to depart from him : accounting himself not worthy that the Son of God should come near so vile a sinner. When our Lord, by that wonderful condescension, stooped to wash his apostles’ feet, he could by no means be persuaded to admit it, not thinking it fit that so great a person should submit himself to so servile an office towards so mean a person as himself ; nor could he be induced to accept it, till our Lord was in a manner forced to threaten him into obedience. When Cornelius, heightened in his apprehensions of him by an immediate command from God concerning him, would have entertained him with expressions of more than ordinary honour and veneration, so far was he from complying with it, that he plainly told him, he was no other than such a man as himself. With how much candour and modesty does he treat the inferior rulers and ministers of the church ? He, upon whom antiquity heaps so many honourable titles, styling himself no other than their fellow-presbyter. Admirable his love to, and zeal for his Master, which he thought he could never express at too high a rate : for his sake venturing on the greatest dangers, and exposing himself to the most imminent hazards of life. It was in his quarrel that he drew his sword against a band of soldiers, and an armed multitude ; and it was love to his Master drew him into that imprudent advice, that he should seek to save himself, and avoid those sufferings that were coming upon him ; that made him promise and engage so deep, to suffer and die with him. Great was his forwardness in owning Christ to be the Messiah and Son of God ; which drew from our Lord that honourable encomium, “Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah.” But greater his courage and constancy in confessing Christ before his most inveterate enemies, especially after he had recovered himself of his fall. With how much plainness did he

tell the Jews at every turn to their very faces, that they were the murderers and crucifiers of the Lord of glory? Nay, with what an undaunted courage, with what an heroic greatness of mind, did he tell that very Sanhedrim, that had sentenced and condemned him, that they were guilty of his murder, and that they could never be saved any other way than by this very Jesus whom they had crucified and put to death?

IV. Lastly, let us reflect upon him as an apostle, as a pastor and guide of souls. And so we find him faithful and diligent in his office, with an infinite zeal endeavouring to instruct the ignorant, reduce the erroneous, to strengthen the weak, and confirm the strong, to reclaim the vicious, and “turn souls to righteousness.” We find him taking all opportunities of preaching to the people, converting many thousands at once. How many voyages and travels did he undergo? with how unconquerable a patience did he endure all conflicts and trials, and surmount all difficulties and oppositions, that he might plant and propagate the Christian faith? not thinking much to lay down his own life to promote and further it. Nor did he only do his duty himself, but as one of the prime superintendents of the church, and as one that was sensible of the value and the worth of souls, he was careful to put others in mind of theirs, earnestly pressing and persuading the pastors and governors of it, “to feed the flock of God, to take upon them the rule and inspection of it freely and willingly,”^b not out of a sinister end, merely of gaining advantages to themselves, but out of a sincere design of doing good to souls; that they would treat them mildly and gently, and be themselves examples of piety and religion to them, as the best way to make their ministry successful and effectual. And because he could not be always present to teach and warn men, he ceased not by letters “to stir up their minds” to the remembrance and practice of what they had been taught: a course, he tells them,ⁱ which he was resolved to hold as long as he lived, as “thinking it meet, while he was in this tabernacle, to stir them up, by putting them in mind of these things; that so they might be able after his decease, to have them always in remembrance.” And this may lead us to the consideration of those writings which he left behind him for the benefit of the church.

V. Now the writings that entitle themselves to this apostle,

^b 1 Pet. v. 3, 4.

ⁱ 2 Pet. i. 12, 13, 15.

were either genuine, or supposititious. The genuine writings are his two epistles, which make up part of the sacred canon. For the first of them, no certain account can be had when it was written; though Baronius and most writers commonly assign it to the year of Christ forty-four: but this cannot be, Peter not being at Rome (from whence it is supposed to have been written) at that time, as we shall see anon. He wrote it to the Jewish converts dispersed through Pontus, Galatia, and the countries thereabouts, chiefly upon the occasion of that persecution which had been raised at Jerusalem; and accordingly, the main design of it is to confirm and comfort them under their present sufferings and persecutions, and to direct and instruct them how to carry themselves in the several states and relations, both of the civil and the Christian life. For the place whence it was written, it is expressly dated from Babylon; but what, or where this Babylon is, is not so easy to determine: some think it was Babylon in Egypt, and probably Alexandria, and that there Peter preached the gospel; others will have it to have been Babylon, the ancient metropolis of Assyria, and where great numbers of Jews dwelt ever since the times of their captivities. But we need not send Peter on so long an errand, if we embrace the notion of a learned man,^k who, by Babylon, will figuratively understand Jerusalem, no longer now the "holy city," but a kind of spiritual Babylon, in which the church of God did at this time groan under great servitude and captivity: and this notion of the word he endeavours to make good, by calling in to his assistance two of the ancient fathers,^l who so understand that of the prophet, "We have healed Babylon, but she was not healed;" where the prophet (say they) by Babylon means Jerusalem, as differing nothing from the wickedness of the nations, nor conforming itself to the law of God. But, generally, the writers of the Romish church, and the more moderate of the reformed party, acquiescing herein in the judgment of antiquity, by Babylon understand Rome; and so, it is plain, St. John calls it in his Revelation,^m either from its conformity in power and greatness to that ancient city, or from that great idolatry which at this time reigned in Rome: and so we may suppose St. Peter to have written it from Rome, not long after his coming thither, though the precise time be not exactly known.

^k L. Capell. Append. ad Hist. Apost. p. 42.

^l Cyril. Alex. et Procop. Gaz. in Esa. liii.

^m Chap. xviii. 2, 10, 21.

VI. As for the second epistle, it was not accounted of old of equal value and authority with the first, and therefore, for some ages, not taken into the sacred canon ; as is expressly affirmed by Eusebius,ⁿ and many of the ancients before him. The ancient Syriac church did not receive it ; and accordingly it is not to be found in their ancient copies of the New Testament :^o yea, those of that church at this day do not own it as canonical, but only read it privately, as we do the apocryphal books. The greatest exception that I can find against it,^p was the difference of its style from the other epistle ; and therefore it was presumed that they were not both written by the same hand. But St. Jerome, who tells us the objection, does elsewhere himself return the answer,^q that the difference in the style and manner of writing might very well arise from hence, that St. Peter, according to his different circumstances, and the necessity of affairs, was forced to use several amanuenses and interpreters ; sometimes St. Mark, and after his departure some other person ; which might justly occasion a difference in the style and character of these epistles : not to say, that the same person may vastly alter and vary his style, according to the times when, or the persons to whom, or the subjects about which he writes, or the temper and disposition he is in at the time of writing, or the care that is used in doing it. Who sees not the vast difference of Jeremy's writing in his prophecy and in his book of Lamentations ? between St. John's in his gospel, his epistles, and apocalypse ? How oft does St. Paul alter his style in several of his epistles, in some more lofty and elegant, in others more rough and harsh ? besides hundreds of instances that might be given, both in ecclesiastical and foreign writers, too obvious to need insisting on in this place. The learned Grotius^r will have this epistle to have been written by Symeon, St. James's immediate successor in the bishopric of Jerusalem, and that the word [Peter] was inserted into the title by another hand : but, as a judicious person of our own observes,^s these were but his posthume annotations, published by others, and no doubt never intended as the deliberate result of that great man's judgment ; especially since he himself tacitly acknowledges, that all

ⁿ Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 3. Orig. apud Niceph. l. v. c. 16.

^o Vid. Edv. Pocock. Præfat. ad Epist. Syr. a se edit.

^p Hier. de script. Eccl. in Petr.

^q Quæst. 11. ad Hedib. tom. iii. p. 151.

^r Annot. in 2 Pet. c. i.

^s Dr. Ham. in Argum. Epist.

copies extant at this day read the title and inscription as it is in our books. And indeed there is a concurrence of circumstances to prove St. Peter to be the author of it: it bears his name in the front and title; yea, somewhat more expressly than the former, which has only one, this, both his names. There is a passage in it that cannot well relate to any but him: when he tells us,[†] that he was present with Christ in the holy mount; “when he received from God the Father honour and glory; where he heard the voice which came from heaven, from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” This evidently refers to Christ’s transfiguration, where none were present but Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, neither of which were ever thought of to be the author of this epistle. Besides, that there is an admirable consent and agreement in many passages between these two epistles, as it were easy to shew in particular instances. Add to this, that St. Jude,[“] speaking of the “scoffers who should come in the last time, walking after their own ungodly lusts,” cites this as that which had been “before spoken by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;” wherein he plainly quotes the words of this second epistle of Peter, affirming, “that there should come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.”[“] And that this does agree to Peter, will farther appear by this, that he tells us of these scoffers that should come in the last days, that is, before the destruction of Jerusalem, (as that phrase is often used in the New Testament,) that they should say, “Where is the promise of his coming?” which clearly respects their making light of those threatenings of our Lord, whereby he had foretold, that he would shortly come in judgment for the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation. This he now puts them in mind of, as what probably he had before told them of *viva voce*, when he was amongst them: for so we find he did elsewhere; Lactantius assuring us,[“] “that amongst many strange and wonderful things which Peter and Paul preached at Rome, and left upon record, this was one: that within a short time God would send a prince, who should destroy the Jews, and lay their cities level with the ground; straitly besiege them, destroy them with famine, so that they should feed upon one another: that their wives and daughters should be

[†] 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 18.

[“] 2 Pet. iii. 2, 3.

[“] Jude v. 17, 18.

[“] Lib. iv. c. 21.

ravished, and their children's brains dashed out before their faces: that all things should be laid waste by fire and sword, and themselves perpetually banished from their own country: and this for their insolent and merciless usage of the innocent and dear Son of God." All which, as he observes, came to pass soon after their death, when Vespasian came upon the Jews, and extinguished both their name and nation. And what Peter here foretold at Rome, we need not question but he had done before to those Jews to whom he wrote this epistle: wherein he especially antidotes them against those corrupt and poisonous principles wherewith many, and especially the followers of Simon Magus, began to infect the church of Christ; and this but a little time before his death, as appears from that passage in it, where he tells them,^z "that he knew he must shortly put off his earthly tabernacle."

VII. Besides these divine epistles, there were other supposititious writings which in the first ages were fathered upon St. Peter. Such was the book called "his Acts," mentioned by Origen,^a Eusebius,^b and others, but rejected by them. Such was his gospel, which probably at first was nothing else but the gospel written by St. Mark, dictated to him (as is generally thought) by St. Peter: and, therefore, as St. Jerome tells us,^c said to be his. Though in the next age there appeared a book under that title, mentioned by Serapion, bishop of Antioch,^d and by him at first suffered to be read in the church; but afterwards, upon a more careful perusal of it, he rejected it as apocryphal, as it was by others after him. Another was the book styled "his Preaching," mentioned and quoted both by Clemens Alexandrinus^e and by Origen,^f but not acknowledged by them to be genuine; nay, expressly said to have been forged by heretics, by an ancient author contemporary with St. Cyprian.^g The next was his Apocalypse, or Revelation, rejected, as Sozomen tells us,^h by the ancients as spurious, but yet read in some churches in Palestine in his time. The last was the book called, "his Judgment," which probably was the same with that called Hermes,ⁱ or Pastor,

^z Chap. i. 14.

^a Orig. tom. xx. in Joan.

^b Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 3.

^c De Script. Eccl. in Petr.

^d Apud Euseb. l. vi. c. 12.

^e Strom. l. vi. p. 635. et in Excerpt. Græc. ex Hypotyp. p. 809.

^f Orig. tom. xiii. in Joan.

^g De Hæret. non rebapt. apud Cypr. p. 142.

^h Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 19.

ⁱ Vid. Rufin. Exposit. Symbol. inter Oper. Hier. tom. iv. p. 113.

a book of good use and esteem in the first times of Christianity, and which, as Eusebius tells us,^k was not only frequently cited by the ancients, but also publicly read in churches.

VIII. We shall conclude this section by considering Peter with respect to his several relations. That he was married is unquestionable, the sacred history mentioning his wife's mother; his wife (might we believe Metaphrastes^l) being the daughter of Aristobulus, brother to Barnabas the apostle. And though St. Jerome would persuade us,^m that he left her behind him, together with his nets, when he forsook all to follow Christ; yet we know that father too well, to be over-confident upon his word in a case of marriage or single life, wherein he is not over-scrupulous sometimes to strain a point, to make his opinion more fair and plausible. The best is, we have an infallible authority which plainly intimates the contrary, the testimony of St. Paul;ⁿ who tells us of Cephas, that "he led about a wife, a sister," along with him, who, for the most part, mutually cohabited and lived together, for aught that can be proved to the contrary. Clemens Alexandrinus gives us this account,^o though he tells us not the time or place; that Peter, seeing his wife going towards martyrdom, exceedingly rejoiced that she was called to so great an honour, and that she was now returning home, encouraging and earnestly exhorting her, and calling her by her name, "bade her to be mindful of our Lord." Such (says he) was the wedlock of that blessed couple, and the perfect disposition and agreement in those things that were dearest to them. By her he is said to have had a daughter called Petronilla,^p (Metaphrastes adds a son,^q) how truly I know not. This only is certain, that Clemens of Alexandria,^r reckons Peter for one of the apostles that was married and had children. And surely he who was so good a man, and so good an apostle, was as good in the relation both of an husband and a father.

^k Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 3.

^l Comment. de S. Pet. apud Sur. ad diem 29 Jun. n. 2.

^m Ep. ad Julian. tom. i. p. 207.

ⁿ 1 Cor. ix. 5. Vid. Clem. Recognit. l. vii. fol. 76. p. 2.

^o Strom. l. vii. p. 736.

^p Bar. ad Ann. 60. n. 32.

^q Ubi supra.

^r Strom. l. iii. p. 448.

SECTION XI.

AN INQUIRY INTO ST. PETER'S GOING TO ROME.

Peter's being at Rome granted in general. The account of it given by Baronius, and the writers of that church, rejected and disproved. No foundation for it in the history of the apostolic acts. No mention of it in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans. No news of his being there at St. Paul's coming to Rome, nor intimation of any such thing in the several epistles which St. Paul wrote from thence. St. Peter's first being at Rome inconsistent with the time of the apostolical synod at Jerusalem; and with an ancient tradition, that the apostles were commanded to stay twelve years in Judea after Christ's death. A passage out of Clemens Alexandrinus noted and corrected to that purpose. Difference among the writers of the Romish church in their accounts. Peter's being twenty-five years bishop of Rome, no solid foundation for it in antiquity. The planting and governing that church equally attributed to Peter and Paul. St. Peter, when (probably) came to Rome. Different dates of his martyrdom assigned by the ancients. A probable account given of it.

It is not my purpose to swim against the stream and current of antiquity in denying St. Peter to have been at Rome; an assertion easilier perplexed and entangled, than confuted and disproved: we may grant the main, without doing any great service to that church, there being evidence enough to every impartial and considering man to spoil that smooth and plausible scheme of times, which Baronius and the writers of that church hath drawn with so much care and diligence. And in order to this we shall first inquire, whether that account which Bellarmine and Baronius give us of Peter's being at Rome be tolerably reconcileable with the history of the apostles' acts recorded by St. Luke, which will be best done by briefly presenting St. Peter's acts in their just series and order of time, and then see what countenance and foundation their account can receive from hence.

II. After our Lord's ascension, we find Peter, for the first year at least, staying with the rest of the apostles at Jerusalem. In the next year he was sent, together with St. John, by the command of the apostles, to Samaria, to preach the gospel to that city, and the parts about it. About three years after, St. Paul meets him at Jerusalem, with whom he stayed some time. In the two following years he visited the late planted churches, preached at Lydda and Joppa, where having "tarried many days," he thence removed to Cæsarea, where he preached to

and baptized Cornelius and his family : whence, after some time, he returned to Jerusalem, where he probably stayed, till cast into prison by Herod, and delivered by the angel. After which we hear no more of him, till three or four years after we find him in the council at Jerusalem : after which he had the contest with St. Paul at Antioch, and thenceforward the sacred story is altogether silent in this matter : so that in all this time we find not the least footstep of any intimation that he went to Rome. This Baronius well foresaw,^{*} and therefore once and again inserts this caution, that St. Luke did not design to record all the apostles' acts, and that he has omitted many things which were done by Peter : which surely no man ever intended to deny. But then that he should omit a matter of such vast moment and importance to the whole Christian world, that not one syllable should be said of a church planted by Peter at Rome ; a church that was to be paramount, the seat of all spiritual power and infallibility, and to which all other churches were to veil and do homage ; nay, that he should not so much as mention that ever he was there, and yet all this said to be done within the time he designed to write of, is by no means reasonable to suppose ; especially considering, that St. Luke records many of his journeys and travels, and his preaching at several places, of far less consequence and concernment. Nor let this be thought the worse of, because a negative argument, since it carries so much rational evidence along with it, that any man, who is not plainly biassed by interest, will be satisfied with it.

III. But let us proceed a little further to inquire, whether we can meet any probable footsteps afterwards. About the year 53, towards the end of Claudius's reign, St. Paul is thought to have writ his epistle to the church of Rome, wherein he spends the greatest part of one chapter in saluting particular persons that were there ; amongst whom it might reasonably have been expected, that St. Peter should have had the first place. And supposing with Baronius,[†] that Peter at this time might be absent from the city, preaching the gospel in some parts in the West, yet we are not sure that St. Paul knew of this ; and if he did, it is strange that in so large an epistle, wherein he had occasion enough, there should be neither direct nor indirect mention of him, or of any church there founded by him : nay,

^{*} Ad Ann. 39. num. 12. ad Ann. 34. num. 285.

[†] Ad An. 58. num. 51.

St. Paul himself intimates,^u what an earnest desire he had to come thither, that he might “impart unto them some spiritual gifts, to the end they might be established in the faith;” for which there could have been no such apparent cause, had Peter been there so lately, and so long before him. Well, St. Paul himself, not many years after, is sent to Rome, Ann. Chr. 56, or, as Eusebius, 57, (though Baronius makes it two years after,) about the second year of Nero; when he comes thither, does he go to sojourn with Peter, as it is likely he would, had he been there? No; but dwelt by himself, in his own hired house. No sooner was he come,^x but he called the chief of the Jews together, acquainted them with the cause and end of his coming, explains the doctrine of Christianity, which when they rejected, he tells them, that “henceforth the salvation of God was sent unto the Gentiles,” who would hear it, to whom he would now address himself: which seems to intimate, that however some few of the Gentiles might have been brought over, yet that no such harvest had been made before his coming, as might reasonably have been expected from St. Peter’s having been so many years amongst them. Within the two first years after St. Paul’s coming to Rome, he wrote epistles to several churches; to the Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, and one to Philemon; in none whereof there is the least mention of St. Peter, or from whence the least probability can be derived that he had been there. In that to the Colossians,^y he tells them, that of the Jews at Rome, he had “no other fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which had been a comfort unto him, save only Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus who was called Justus,” which evidently excludes St. Peter. And in that to Timothy, which Baronius confesses to have been written a little before his martyrdom, (though probably it was written the same time with the rest above mentioned,) he tells him,^z that, “at his first answer at Rome, no man stood with him, but that all men forsook him:” which we can hardly believe St. Peter would have done, had he then been there. He farther tells him, that “only Luke was with him;” that Crescens was gone to this place, Titus to that, and Tychicus left at another. Strange! that if Peter was at this time gone from Rome, St. Paul should take no notice of it

^u Rom. i. 10, 11, 12.

^x Acts xxviii. 17.

^y Chap. iv. 10, 11.

^z 2 Tim. iv. 16.

as well as the rest. Was he so inconsiderable a person, as not to be worth the remembering? or his errand of so small importance, as not to deserve a place in St. Paul's account, as well as that of Crescens to Galatia, or of Titus to Dalmatia? Surely, the true reason was, that St. Peter as yet had not been at Rome, and so there could be no foundation for it.

IV. It were no hard matter farther to demonstrate the inconsistency of that account which Bellarmine and Baronius give us of Peter's being at Rome, from the time of the apostolical synod at Jerusalem. For if St. Paul went up to that council fourteen years after his own conversion, as he plainly intimates;^a and that he himself was converted anno 35, somewhat less than two years after the death of Christ; then it plainly appears, that this council was holden anno 48, in the sixth year of Claudius, if not somewhat sooner: for St. Paul's *διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν* does not necessarily imply, that fourteen years were completely past, *διὰ* signifying *circa*, as well as *post*, but that it was near about that time. This being granted, (and if it be not, it is easy to make it good,) then three things, amongst others, will follow from it. First, that whereas, according to Bellarmine^b and Baronius,^c St. Peter, after his first coming to Rome, (which they place anno 44, and the second of Claudius,) was seven years before he returned thence to the council at Jerusalem, they are strangely out in their story, there being but three, or at most four years, between his going thither and the celebration of that council. Secondly, that when they tell us,^d that St. Peter's leaving Rome to come to the council, was upon the occasion of the decree of Claudius, banishing all Jews out of the city, this can no ways be. For Orosius does not only affirm,^e but prove it from Josephus, that Claudius's decree was published in the ninth year of his reign, or Ann. Chr. 51, three years at least after the celebration of the council. Thirdly, that when Baronius tells us,^f that the reason why Peter went to Rome after the breaking up of the synod, was because Claudius was now dead, he not daring to go before for fear of the decree; this can be no reason at all, the council being ended at least three years before that decree took place; so that he might safely have gone thither, without

^a Gal. ii. 1.

^b Bellarmin. de Rom. Pontif. l. ii. c. 6.

^c Bar. ad Ann. 39. num. 15.

^d Bellarmin. ut supra, et Bar. ad Ann. 51. num. 1. 3.

^e Lib. vii. c. 6.

^f Ad Ann. 58. num. 51.

the least danger from it. It might farther be shewed, (if it were necessary,) that the account which even they themselves give us, is not very consistent with itself: so fatally does a bad cause draw men, whether they will or no, into errors and mistakes.

V. The truth is, the learned men of that church are not well agreed among themselves to give in their verdict in this case. And, indeed, how should they, when the thing itself affords no solid foundation for it? Onuphrius, a man of great learning and industry in all matters of antiquity, and who (as the writer of Baronius's Life informs us²) designed before Baronius to write the history of the church, goes a way by himself in assigning the time of St. Peter's founding his see both at Antioch and Rome.³ For finding, by the account of the sacred story, that Peter did not leave Judea for the ten first years after our Lord's ascension, and consequently could not in that time erect his see at Antioch, he affirms, that he went first to Rome; whence returning to the council at Jerusalem, he thence went to Antioch, where he remained seven years, till the death of Claudius; and having spent almost the whole reign of Nero in several parts of Europe, returned, in the last of Nero's reign, to Rome, and there died: an opinion for which he is sufficiently chastised by Baronius and others of that party.¹ And here I cannot but remark the ingenuity (for the learning sufficiently commends itself) of Monsieur Valois,^k who freely confesses the mistake of Baronius, Petavius, &c., in making Peter go to Rome, anno 44, the second year of Claudius, whenas it is plain (says he) from the history of the Acts, that Peter went not out of Judea and Syria till the death of Herod, Claudii anno 4, two whole years after. Consonant to which, as he observes, is what Apollonius, a writer of the second century, reports from a tradition current in his time, that the apostles did not depart asunder till the twelfth year after Christ's ascension, our Lord himself having so commanded them. In confirmation whereof, let me add a passage that I met with in Clemens of Alexandria,^l where from St. Peter he records this speech of our Saviour to his apostles, spoken probably either a little before his death, or after his resurrection: *Ἐὰν μὲν οὖν τις θελήσῃ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ μετανοῆσαι, διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματός μου πιστεύειν ἐπὶ τὸν*

² Hier. Barnab. de vit. Bar. l. i. c. 18.

³ Onuphr. Annot. ad Plat. in vit. Petr. p. 9. et in Fast.

^k Annot. ad Euseb. l. ii. c. 16.

¹ Ad Ann. 39. n. 12.

^l Stromat. l. vi. p. 636.

Θεὸν, ἀφηθέσονται αὐτῷ αἱ ἁμαρτίαι μετὰ δώδεκα ἔτη· ἐξέλθετε εἰς τὸν κόσμον, μή τις εἴπῃ, οὐκ ἠκούσαμεν. "If any Israelite shall repent, and believe in God through my name, his sins shall be forgiven him after twelve years. Go ye into the world, lest any should say, we have not heard." This passage, as ordinarily pointed in all editions that I have seen, is scarce capable of any tolerable sense: for what is the meaning of a penitent Israelite's being pardoned after twelve years? It is therefore probable, yea, certain with me, that the stop ought to be after *ἁμαρτίαι*, and *μετὰ δώδεκα ἔτη* joined to the following clause, and then the sense will run clear and smooth: "If any Jew shall repent, and believe the gospel, he shall be pardoned; but after twelve years go ye into all the world, that none may pretend that they have not heard the sound of the gospel." The apostles were first to preach the gospel to the Jews for some considerable time, twelve years after Christ's ascension, in and about Judea, and then to betake themselves to the provinces of the Gentile world, to make known to them the glad tidings of salvation; exactly answerable to the tradition mentioned by Apollonius. Besides, the Chronicon Alexandrinum tells us, that Peter came not to Rome till the seventh year of Claudius, anno Christi 49: so little certainty can there be of any matter, wherein there is no truth. Nay, the same excellent man before mentioned does not stick elsewhere to profess,^m he wonders at Baronius, that he should make Peter come from Rome, banished thence by Claudius's edict to the synod at Jerusalem, the same year, viz. anno Claudii 9: a thing absolutely inconsistent with that story of the apostles' acts, recorded by St. Luke, wherein there is the space of no less than three years from the time of that synod to the decree of Claudius. It being evident, what he observes, that after the celebration of that council, St. Paul went back to Antioch, afterwards into Syria and Cilicia, to preach the gospel; thence into Phrygia, Galatia, and Mysia; from whence he went into Macedonia, and first preached at Philippi, then at Thessalonica and Berea, afterwards stayed some considerable time at Athens, and last of all went to Corinth, where he met with Aquila and Priscilla, lately come from Italy, banished Rome with the rest of the Jews by the decree of Claudius: all which, by an

^m H. Vales. Annot. in Euseb. l. ii. c. 18.

easy and reasonable computation, can take up no less than three years at least.

VI. That which caused Baronius to split upon so many rocks, was not so much want of seeing them, which a man of his parts and industry could not but in a great measure see, as the unhappy necessity of defending those unsound principles which he had undertaken to maintain. For being to make good Peter's five and twenty years presidency over the church of Rome, he was forced to confound times, and dislocate stories, that he might bring all his ends together. What foundation this story of Peter's being five and twenty years bishop of Rome has in antiquity, I find not, unless it sprang from hence, that Eusebius places Peter's coming to Rome in the second year of Claudius, and his martyrdom in the fourteenth of Nero, between which there is the just space of five and twenty years. Whence those that came after concluded, that he sat bishop there all that time. It cannot be denied, but that in St. Jerome's translation it is expressly said, that he continued five and twenty years bishop of that city; but then it is as evident, that this was his own addition, who probably set things down as the report went in his time, no such thing being to be found in the Greek copy of Eusebius.ⁿ Nor, indeed, does he ever there or elsewhere positively affirm St. Peter to have been bishop of Rome, but only that he preached the gospel there; and expressly affirms,^o that he and St. Paul being dead, Linus was the first bishop of Rome. To which I may add, that when the ancients speak of the bishops of Rome, and the first originals of that church, they equally attribute the founding and the episcopacy and government of it to Peter and Paul, making the one as much concerned in it as the other. Thus Epiphanius,^p reckoning up the bishops of that see, places Peter and Paul in the front, as the first bishops of Rome: *ἐν Ῥώμῃ γὰρ γεγόνασι πρῶτοι Πέτρος καὶ Παῦλος, οἱ ἀπόστολοι αὐτοὶ καὶ ἐπίσκοποι*, "Peter and Paul, apostles, became the first bishops of Rome, then Linus," &c. And again, a little after, *ἡ τῶν ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἐπισκόπων διαδοχὴ ταύτην ἔχει τὴν ἀκολουθίαν*, "the succession of the bishops of Rome was in this manner, Peter and Paul, Linus, Cletus," &c. And Hegesippus,^q speaking of their

ⁿ Χρον. Καν. ad num. 1050. p. 204.

^p Contr. Carpocrat. Hæres. xxvii. s. 6.

^o Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 2.

^q De excid. Jud. l. iii. c. 2.

coming to Rome, equally says of them, that they were *doctores Christianorum, sublimes operibus, clari magisterio*, "the instructors of the Christians, admirable for miracles, and renowned for their authority." However, granting not only that he was there, but that he was bishop, and that for five and twenty years together, yet what would this make for the unlimited sovereignty and universality of that church, unless a better evidence than "feed my sheep" could be produced for its uncontrollable supremacy and dominion over the whole Christian world?

VII. The sum is this: granting, what none that has any reverence for antiquity will deny, that St. Peter was at Rome, he probably came thither some few years before his death, joined with and assisted St. Paul in preaching of the gospel, and then both sealed the testimony of it with their blood. The date of his death is differently assigned by the ancients. Eusebius places it anno 69,^r in the fourteenth of Nero; Epiphanius in the twelfth.^a That which seems to me most probable is, that it was in the tenth, or the year 65, which I thus compute: Nero's burning of Rome is placed by Tacitus,^t under the consulship of C. Lecanius and M. Licinius, about the month of July, that is, Ann. Chr. 64. This act procured him the infinite hatred and clamours of the people, which having in vain endeavoured several ways to remove and pacify, he at last resolved upon this project, to derive the odium upon the Christians; whom, therefore, both to appease the gods and please the people, he condemned as guilty of the fact, and caused to be executed with all manner of acute and exquisite tortures. This persecution we may suppose began about the end of that, or the beginning of the following year. And under this persecution, I doubt not, it was, that St. Peter suffered, and changed earth for heaven.

AN APPENDIX TO THE PRECEDING SECTION,

CONTAINING A VINDICATION OF ST. PETER'S BEING AT ROME.

St. Peter's being at Rome unjustly questioned. The thing itself sufficiently attested by the authority of the ancients. The express testimonies of Papias, Irenæus, Dionysius of Corinth, Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian, Caius, and Origen, produced to that purpose. The exceptions made to these testimonies shewed to be weak and trifling by a

^r Chron. p. 162.

^a Hæres. xxvii. s. 6.

^t Annal. l. xv. c. 38, 41.

particular examination of each of them. A good cause needs not be supported by indirect methods. The church of Rome not much advantaged by allowing this story. The needless questioning a story so well attested makes way for shaking the faith of all ancient history.

FINDING the truth of what is supposed and granted in the foregoing section, to wit, St. Peter's going to, and suffering at Rome, not only doubted of heretofore in the beginning of the Reformation, while the paths of antiquity were less frequent and beaten out, but now again lately in this broad day-light of ecclesiastical knowledge not only called in question, but exploded as most vain and fabulous, and that especially by a foreign professor^u of name and note; it may not be amiss, having the opportunity of this impression, to make some few remarks for the better clearing of this matter.

II. And first, I observe that this matter of fact is attested by witnesses of the most remote antiquity, persons of great eminency and authority, and who lived near enough to those times to know the truth and certainty of those things which they reported. And perhaps there is scarce any one piece of ancient church-history, for which there is more clear, full, and constant evidence, than there is for this. Not to insist on that passage of Ignatius,^x in his epistle to the Romans, which seems yet to look this way; it is expressly asserted by Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia, who (as Irenæus tells us^y) was scholar to St. John, and fellow-pupil with St. Polycarp; and though we should with Eusebius suppose,^z that it was not St. John the apostle, whose scholar he was, but another, surnamed the Elder, that lived at Ephesus, yet will this set him very little lower in point of time. Now Papias says,^a not only that St. Peter was at Rome, and preached the Christian faith there, but that he wrote thence his first epistle, and by his authority confirmed the gospel, which St. Mark, his disciple and follower, at the request of the Romans, had drawn up. And that we may see that he did not carelessly take up these things as common hearsays, it was his

^u Fred. Spanhem. Diss. de temere credita Petri in urb. Romam profectio. Lugd. Bat. edit. 1679. vid. etiam Brutum Fulmen, or observations on the Bull against Q. Eliz. p. 88. etc. Lond. 1681.

^x Οὐχ ὡς Πέτρος καὶ Παῦλος διατάσσομαι ὑμῖν· ἐκεῖνοι Ἀπόστολοι, ἐγὼ κατὰκριτος. Ep. ad Rom. p. 23.

^y Advers. Hæres. l. v. c. 33. p. 498.

^z Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 39.

^a Ap. Euseb. ibid. l. ii. c. 15.

custom, wherever he met with any that had conversed with the apostles, to pick up what memoirs he could meet with concerning them, and particularly to inquire what Andrew, what Peter, what Philip, what Thomas, or James, or the rest of the disciples of our Lord, had either said or done: which sufficiently shews what care he took to derive the most accurate notices of these matters.

III. Next Papias comes Irenæus, a man, as St. Jerome styles him,^b of the apostolic times, and was, he tells us, Papias's own scholar: however, it is certain from his own account^c that he was disciple to St. Polycarp, a man famous for his learning, prudence, gravity, and piety, throughout the whole Christian world. About the year 179, he was made bishop of the metropolitan church of Lyons in France, a little before which he had been despatched upon a message to Rome, and had conversed with the great men there. Now his testimony in this case is uncontrollable; for he says, that Peter and Paul preached the gospel at Rome,^d and founded a church there; and elsewhere, that the great and most ancient church of Rome was founded and constituted by the two glorious apostles Peter and Paul;^e and that these blessed apostles, having founded this church, delivered the episcopal care of it over unto Linus. Contemporary with Irenæus, or rather a little before him, was Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, a man of singular eminency and authority in those times, who in an epistle which he wrote to the church of Rome,^f compares the plantation of Christianity, which Peter and Paul had made, both at Rome and Corinth; and says farther, that after they had sown the seeds of the evangelical doctrine at Corinth, they went together into Italy, where they taught the faith, and suffered martyrdom.

IV. Toward the latter end of the second century flourished Clemens of Alexandria, presbyter of that church, and regent of the catechetic school there; who, in his book of Institutions, gives the very same testimony which we quoted from Papias before;^g they being both brought in by Eusebius as joint-evidence in this matter. Tertullian, who lived much about the same time at Carthage that Clemens did at Alexandria, and had been, as is

^b Epist. ad Theodor. p. 196.

^d Adv. Hæres. l. iii. c. 1.

^f Ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 25.

^c Ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. 20.

^e Ibid. c. 3.

^g Loc. supra citato.

probable, more than once at Rome, affirms most expressly more than once and again,^b that the church of Rome was happy in having its doctrine sealed with apostolic blood, and that Peter was crucified in that place; or, as he expresses it, *passioni Domini adæquatus*: that Peter baptized in Tiber,ⁱ as John the Baptist had done in Jordan, and elsewhere; that when Nero first dyed the yet tender faith at Rome with the blood of its professors,^k then it was that Peter was girt by another, and bound to the cross.

V. Next to Tertullian succeeds Caius, an ecclesiastical person, as Eusebius calls him, flourishing anno 214, in the time of pope Zephyrin; who in a book which he wrote against Proclus, one of the heads of the Cataphrygian sect, speaking concerning the places where the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul were buried, has these words,^l "I am able to shew the very tombs of the apostles; for whether you go into the Vatican, or into the Via Ostiensis, you will meet with the sepulchres of those that founded that church," meaning the church of Rome. The last witness whom I shall produce in this case is Origen, a man justly revered for his great learning and piety, and who took a journey to Rome while pope Zephyrin yet lived, on purpose, as himself tells us,^m to behold that church, so venerable for its antiquity; and therefore cannot but be supposed to have been very inquisitive to satisfy himself in all, especially the ecclesiastical antiquities of that place. Now he expressly says of Peter,ⁿ that after he had preached to the dispersed Jews of the Eastern parts, he came at last to Rome, where, according to his own request, he was crucified with his head downwards. Lower than Origen I need not descend, it being granted by those who oppose this story,^o that in the time of Origen, the report of St. Peter's going to, and suffering martyrdom at Rome, was commonly received in the Christian church. And now I would fain know, what one passage of those ancient times can be proved either by more, or by more considerable evidence than this is: and indeed, considering how small a portion of the writings of those first ages of the church has been transmitted to us, there

^b De præscript. Hæret. c. 36.

ⁱ De Baptism. c. 4.

^k Scorpiac. c. ult.

^l Ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 25.

^m Ibid. l. vi. c. 14.

ⁿ Vol. iii. Exposit. in Gen. ap. Euseb. l. iii. c. 1.

^o Spanh. Diss. de temere credita Petri in Urb. Romam profectio, c. 3. n. 34, 35.

is much greater cause rather to wonder that we should have so many witnesses in this case, than that we have no more.

VI. Secondly, I observe, that the arguments brought to shake the credit of this story, and the exceptions made to these ancient testimonies, are very weak and trifling, and altogether unbecoming the learning and gravity of those that make them. For arguments against it, what can be more weak and inconcluding than to assert the fabulousness of this story,^p because no mention is made of it by St. Luke in the apostolical history, no footsteps of it to be found in any of St. Paul's epistles written from Rome; as if he might not come thither time enough after the accounts of the sacred story do expire: that St. Peter was never at Rome,^q because Clemens Romanus says nothing of it in his epistle to the Corinthians, when yet he mentions St. Paul's coming to the bounds of the West; and what yet is more absurd, because no notice is taken of it by the Roman historians who wrote the acts of that age,^r especially Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dio; as if these great writers had had nothing else to do but to fill their commentaries with accounts concerning Christians, whom, it is plain, they despised and scorned, and looked upon as a contemptible, execrable sort of men, and therefore very little beside the bare mention of them, and that too but rarely, is to be met with in any of their writings; much less can it be expected that they should give an account of the accidents and circumstances of particular Christians: besides that, this whole way of reasoning is negative, and purely depends upon the silence of some few authors, which can signify nothing, where there is such a current and uncontrollable tradition, and so many positive authorities to the contrary: and yet these are the best, and almost only arguments that are offered in this matter.

VII. And of no greater force or weight are the exceptions made to the testimonies of the ancients, which we have produced, as will appear by a summary enumeration of the most material of them. Against Papias's evidence it is excepted,^s that he was *Σφόδρα σμικρὸς τὸν νοῦν*, as Eusebius characterizes him, "a man of a very weak and undiscerning judgment," and that he derived several things strange and unheard-of from mere tradition. But all this is said of him by Eusebius only upon the account of some

^p Id. *ibid.* c. 2. n. 3.

^q *Ibid.* n. 16.

^r *Ibid.* n. 17.

^s *Ibid.* c. 3, n. 8.

doctrinal principles and opinions, and some rash and absurd expositions of our Saviour's doctrine, carelessly taken up from others, and handed down without due examination; particularly his millenary, or chiliastic notions: but what is this to invalidate his testimony in the case before us, a matter of a quite different nature from those mentioned by Eusebius? May not a man be mistaken in abstruse speculations, and yet be fit enough to judge in ordinary cases? as if none but a man of acute parts and a subtle apprehension, one able to pierce into the reasons, consistency, and consequences of doctrinal conclusions, were capable to deliver down matters of fact, things fresh in memory, done within much less than an hundred years, in themselves highly probable, and wherein no interest could be served, either for him to deceive others, or for others to deceive him.

VIII. Against Irenæus it is put in bar, that he gave not this testimony till after his return from Rome,[†] that is, about an hundred and forty years after St. Peter's first pretended coming thither; which is no great abatement in a testimony of so remote antiquity, when they had so many evidences and opportunities of satisfying themselves in the truth of things which to us are utterly lost; that before his times, many frivolous traditions began to take place, and that he himself is sometimes mistaken: the proper inference from which, if pursued to its just issue, must be this, either that he is always mistaken, or at least that he is so in this.

IX. The authority of Dionysius of Corinth is thrown off with this:[‡] that it is of no greater value than that of Irenæus; that churches then began to emulate each other, by pretending to be of apostolical foundation; and that Dionysius herein consulted the honour of his own church, by deriving upon it the authority of those two great apostles Peter and Paul, and in that respect setting it on the same level with Rome; which yet is a mere suggestion of his own, and so far as it respects Dionysius, is said without any just warrant from antiquity: besides, his testimony itself is called in question,^{*} for affirming that Peter and Paul went together from Corinth into Italy, and there taught, and suffered martyrdom at the same time. Against their coming together to Corinth, and thence passing into Italy, nothing is

[†] Spanh. Diss. de temere credita Petri in Urb. Romam profectioe, c. 3. n. 20.

[‡] Ibid. n. 26.

^{*} Ibid. n. 27.

brought, but that the account which St. Luke gives of the travels and preachings of these apostles is not consistent with St. Peter's coming to Rome under Claudius; which let them look to, whose interest it is that it should be so, I mean them of the church of Rome. And for his saying that they suffered martyrdom *κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν καιρὸν*, "at the same time," it does not necessarily imply their suffering the same day and year, but admits of some considerable distance of time; it being elsewhere granted by our author,^y that this phrase, *κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν χρόνον*, is oft used in Josephus in a lax sense, as including what happened within the compass of some years.

X. To enervate the testimony of Clemens Alexandrinus, it is said,^z (with how little pretence of reason, let any man judge,) that Eusebius quotes it out of a book of Clemens that is now lost, and that he tells us not whence St. Clemens derived the report; that abundance of apocryphal writings were extant in his time, and that he himself inserts a great many frivolous traditions into his writings: which if it were granted, would do no service in this cause, unless it were asserted that all things he says are doubtful or fabulous because some few are so.

XI. Much after the same rate it is argued against Tertullian,^a that he was a man of great credulity; that he sets down some passages concerning St. John which are not related by other writers of those times; that he was mistaken in our Saviour's age at the time of his passion;^b that he was imposed upon in the account which he says Tiberius the emperor sent to the senate concerning Christ; which, forsooth, must needs be false, because no mention is made of it by Suetonius, Tacitus, or Dio.

XII. The exceptions to Caius are no whit stronger than the former, viz. that he flourished but in the beginning of the third century,^c when many false reports were set on foot, and that it is not reasonable to believe that in those times of persecution the tombs of the apostles should be undefaced, and had in such public honour and veneration: as if the places where the apostles were buried could not be familiarly known to Christians, without being commonly shewn to their heathen perse-

^y Dissert. de Anno Convers. Paul. n. 17.

^z Spanh. Diss. ut supra, c. 3. n. 7.

^b Ibid. n. 32.

^a Ibid. n. 31.

^c Ibid. n. 28, 29.

cutors, or without erecting pompous and stately monuments over their graves, to provoke the rage and malice of their enemies to fall foul upon them.

XIII. Against Origen nothing is pretended, but what is notoriously vain and frivolous;^d as that perhaps his reports concerning the travels of the apostles are not sufficiently certain; that in some other cases he produces testimonies out of apocryphal writings; and that many things are reported concerning himself, which are at best obscure and ambiguous; and that Baronius and Valesius cannot agree about the time of his journey to Rome. I have but lightly touched upon most of these exceptions, because the very mention of them is enough to supersede a studied and operose confutation: and indeed they are generally such as may with equal force be levelled almost against any ancient history.

XIV. Thirdly, I observe how far zeal, even for the best cause, may sometimes transport learned men to secure it by undue and imprudent methods, and such as one would think were made use of rather to shew the acumen and subtlety of the author, than any strength or cogency in the arguments. Plain it is, that they who set themselves to undermine this story, design therein to serve the interests of the Protestant cause, against the vain and unjust pretences of the see of Rome, and utterly to subvert the very foundations of that title whereby they lay claim to St. Peter's power. This indeed, could it be fairly made good, and without offering violence to the authority of those ancient and venerable sages of the Christian church, would give a mortal blow to the Romish cause, and free us from several of their groundless and sophistical allegations. But when this cannot be done without calling in question the first and most early records of the church, and throwing off the authority of the ancients, *non tali auxilio*, truth needs no such weapons to defend itself, but is able to stand up, and triumph in its own strength, without calling in such indirect artifices to support it. We can safely grant the main of the story, that St. Peter did go to Rome, and came thither ἐν τέλει, (as Origen expressly says he did,^e) about the latter end of his life, and there suffered martyrdom for the faith of Christ: and yet this is no disadvantage to ourselves; nay,

^d Spanh. Diss. ut supra, c. 3. n. 34.

^e Expos. in Genes. ubi supra.

it is that which utterly confounds all their accounts of things, and proves their pretended story of St. Peter's being twenty-five years bishop of that see to be not only vain, but false, as has been sufficiently shewn in the foregoing section. But to deny that St. Peter ever was at Rome, contrary to the whole stream and current of antiquity,^f and the unanimous consent of the most early writers, and that merely upon little surmises, and trifling cavils; and in order thereunto to treat the reverend fathers, whose memories have ever been dear and sacred in the Christian church, with rude reflexions and spiteful insinuations, is a course I confess not over ingenuous, and might give too much occasion to our adversaries of the church of Rome to charge us (as they sometimes do, falsely enough) with a neglect of antiquity and contempt of the fathers; but that it is notoriously known, that all the great names of the Protestant party, men most celebrated for learning and piety, have always paid a most just deference and veneration to antiquity, and upon that account have freely allowed this story of St. Peter's going to Rome, as our author, who opposes it, is forced to grant.^g

XV. Fourthly, it deserves to be considered, whether the needless questioning a story so well attested, may not in time open too wide a gap to shake the credit of all history. For if things done at so remote a distance of time, and which have all the evidence that can be desired to make them good, may be doubted of or denied, merely for the sake of some few weak and insignificant exceptions which may be made against them, what is there that can be secure? There are few passages of ancient history, against which a man of wit and parts may not start some objections, either from the writers of them, or from the account of the things themselves; and shall they therefore be presently discarded, or condemned to the number of the false or fabulous? If this liberty be indulged, farewell church-history; nay, it is to be feared, whether the sacred story will be able long to maintain its divine authority. We live in an age of great scepticism and infidelity, wherein men have in a great measure put off the reverence due to sacred things; and witty

^f Vid. J. G. Voss. Harm. Evangel. l. iii. c. 4. et Chamier. Panstrat. Cath. de R. Pontif. l. xiii. c. 4.

^g Spanh. Diss. ut supra, c. 1. n. 11.

men seem much delighted to hunt out objections, bestow their censures, expose the credit of former ages, and to believe little but what themselves either see or hear. And therefore it will become wise and good men to be very tender, how they loosen, much more "remove the old land-marks, which the fathers have set," lest we run ourselves, before we be aware, into a labyrinth and confusion, from whence it will not be easy to get out.

THE LIFE OF SAINT PAUL.

SECTION I.

OF ST. PAUL, FROM HIS BIRTH TILL HIS CONVERSION.

St. Paul, why placed next Peter. Tarsus the place of his birth ; an university, and a Roman corporation. His parents of the old stock of Israel ; descended of the tribe of Benjamin. Jacob's prophecy applied to him by the ancients. His names : Saul, whence ; Paul, when assumed, and why. His education in the schools of Tarsus, and in the trade of tent-making. The custom of the Jews in bringing up their youth to manual trades. His study of the law under the tutorage of Gamaliel. This Gamaliel, who. Why said to have been a Christian. Sitting at the feet of their masters, the posture of learners. His joining himself to the sect of the Pharisees. An inquiry into the temper and manners of that sect. The fiery zeal and activity of his temper. His being engaged in Stephen's martyrdom. His violent persecution of the church. His journey to Damascus. His conversion by the way, and the manner of it. His blindness. His rapture into the third heaven, when (probably.) His sight restored. His being baptized, and preaching Christ.

THOUGH St. Paul was none of the twelve apostles, yet had he the honour of being an apostle extraordinary, and to be immediately called in a way peculiar to himself. He justly deserves a place next St. Peter ; for as "in their lives they were pleasant and lovely," so "in their death they were not divided : " especially if it be true, that they both suffered not only for the same cause, but at the same time as well as place. St. Paul was born at Tarsus, the metropolis of Cilicia : a city infinitely rich and populous, and what contributed more to the fame and honour of it, an academy, furnished with schools of learning, where the scholars so closely plied their studies, that, as Strabo informs us,^a they excelled in all arts of polite learning and philosophy those of other places, yea, even of Alexandria and Athens itself ; and that even Rome was beholden to it for many of its best professors. It was a Roman *municipium*, or free corporation, invested with many franchises and privileges by Julius Cæsar and Augustus, who granted to the inhabitants of it the honours and im-

^a Geograph. l. xiv. p. 403.

munities of citizens of Rome. In which respect St. Paul owned and asserted it as the privilege of his birth-right,^b that he was a Roman, and thereby free from being bound or beaten. True it is, that St. Jerome^c (followed herein by one^d who himself travelled in these parts) makes him born at Gischalis, a well-fortified town in Judea; which being besieged and taken by the Roman army, his parents fled away with him, and dwelt at Tarsus. But besides that this contradicts St. Paul, who expressly affirms, that he was born at Tarsus, there needs no more to confute this opinion, than that St. Jerome elsewhere slights it as a fabulous report.^e

II. His parents were Jews, and that of the ancient stock, not entering in by the gate of proselytism, but originally descended from that nation, which surely he means, when he says, that he “was an Hebrew of the Hebrews,” either because both his parents were Jews, or rather that all his ancestors had been so. They belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, whose founder was the youngest son of the old patriarch Jacob, who thus prophesied of him:^f “Benjamin shall raven as a wolf, in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.” This prophetic character, Tertullian,^g and others after him, will have to be accomplished in our apostle. As a “ravening wolf in the morning devouring the prey;” that is, as a persecutor of the churches, in the first part of his life destroying the flock of God: “in the evening dividing the spoil;” that is, in his declining and reduced age, as doctor of the nations, feeding and distributing to Christ’s sheep.

III. We find him described by two names in scripture, one Hebrew and the other Latin; probably referring both to his Jewish and Roman capacity and relation. The one Saul, a name frequent and common in the tribe of Benjamin ever since the first king of Israel, who was of that name, was chosen out of that tribe; in memory whereof they were wont to give their children this name at their circumcision. His other name was Paul, assumed by him, as some think, at his conversion, to denote his humility; as others, in memory of his converting Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor, in imitation of the

^b Acts xxii. 25, 26.

^d Bellon. Observ. l. ii. c. 99.

^f Gen. xlix. 27.

^c De Script. Eccl. in Paul.

^e Com. in Philem. p. 263. tom. ix.

^g Adv. Marc. l. v. c. 1.

generals and emperors of Rome, who were wont, from the places and nations that they conquered, to assume the name, as an additional honour and title to themselves; as Scipio Africanus, Cæsar Germanicus, Parthicus, Sarmaticus, &c. But this seems noway consistent with the great humility of this apostle. More probable, therefore, it is, what Origen thinks,^h that he had a double name given him at his circumcision: Saul, relating to his Jewish original; and Paul, referring to the Roman corporation, where he was born. And this the scripture seems to favour, when it says, "Saul, who also is called Paul."ⁱ And this, perhaps, may be the reason why St. Luke, so long as he speaks of him as conversant among the Jews in Syria, styles him Saul; but afterwards, when he left those parts and went among the Gentiles, he gives him the name of Paul, as a name more frequent and familiarly known to them. And for the same reason, no doubt, he constantly calls himself by that name in all his epistles written to the Gentile churches. Or if it was taken up by him afterwards, it was probably done at his conversion, according to the custom and manner of the Hebrews; who used many times, upon solemn and eminent occasions, especially upon their entering upon a more strict and religious course of life, to change their names, and assume one which they had not before.

IV. In his youth he was brought up in the schools of Tarsus, fully instructed in all the liberal arts and sciences, whereby he became admirably acquainted with foreign and external authors. Together with which he was brought up to a particular trade and course of life; according to the great maxim and principle of the Jews, that "he who teaches not his son a trade, teaches him to be a thief."^k They thought it not only fit, but a necessary part of education, for their wisest and most learned rabbins to be brought up to a manual trade; whereby, if occasion was, they might be able to maintain themselves. Hence (as Drusius observes^l) nothing more common in their writings, than to have them denominated from their callings: Rabbi Jose, the tanner; Rabbi Jochanan, the shoemaker; Rabbi Juda, the baker, &c.; a custom taken up by the Christians, especially the monks and ascetics of the primitive times, who, together with their strict

^h Præfat. in Ep. ad Rom.

ⁱ Vid. D. Lightf. Hor. Heb. in 1 Cor. i. l.

^k Talm. Tract. Kiddusch. c. i. ap. Buxtorf. in voc. אימנור.

^l Annot. in Act. xviii. 3.

profession, and almost incredible exercises of devotion, each took upon him a particular trade, whereat he daily wrought, and by his own hand-labour maintained himself.^m And this course of life the Jews were very careful should be free from all suspicion of scandal: אומנות נקיה, (as they call it,ⁿ) a “clean,” that is honest “trade;” being wont to say, that he was happy that had his parents employed in an honest and commendable calling; as he was miserable, who saw them conversant in any sordid and dishonest course of life. The trade our apostle was put to was that of tent-making,^o whereat he wrought, for some particular reasons, even after his calling to the apostolate: an honest, but mean course of life, and, as Chrysostom observes,^p an argument that his parents were not of the nobler and better rank; however, it was an useful and gainful trade, especially in those warlike countries, where armies had such frequent use of tents.

V. Having run through the whole circle of the sciences, and laid the sure foundations of human learning at Tarsus, he was by his parents sent to Jerusalem, to be perfected in the study of the law, and put under the tutorage of Rabban Gamaliel.^q This Gamaliel was the son of Rabban Symeon, (probably presumed to be the same Symeon that came into the temple and took Christ into his arms,) president of the court of the Sanhedrim: he was a doctor of the law, a person of great wisdom and prudence, and head at that time of one of the families of the schools at Jerusalem: a man of chief eminency and authority in the Jewish Sanhedrim, and president of it at that very time when our blessed Saviour was brought before it. He lived to a great age, and was buried by Onkelos the proselyte, author of the Chaldee Paraphrase, (one who infinitely loved and honoured him,) at his own vast expense and charge. He it was that made that wise and excellent speech in the Sanhedrim, in favour of the apostles and their religion. Nay, he himself is said (though I know not why) to have been a Christian,^r and his sitting amongst the senators to have been connived at by the apostles, that he might be the better friend to their affairs. Chrysippus, presbyter of the church of Jerusalem,^s adds, that he was brother’s son to Nicodemus,

^m Epiph. lxxx. c. 4.

ⁿ Buxtorf. ubi. supr.

^o Acts xviii. 3.

^p De Laud. S. Paul. tom. v. p. 512.

^q Acts xxii. 3, 4.

^r Clem. Recognit. l. i. p. 16, 17.

^s Ap. Phot. cod. CLXXI. Col. 384. extat Luciani hac de re Epist. ap. Sur. ad 3 Aug. p. 31. et Bar. ad Ann. 415.

together with whom he and his son Abib were baptized by Peter and John. This account he derives from Lucian, a presbyter also of that church under John, patriarch of Jerusalem, who, in an epistle of his still extant, tells us, that he had this, together with some other things, communicated to him in a vision by Gamaliel himself: which if true, no better evidence could be desired in this matter. At the feet of this Gamaliel, St. Paul tells us, he was "brought up," alluding to the custom of the Jewish masters, who were wont to sit while their disciples and scholars stood at their feet: which honorary custom continued till the death of this Gamaliel, and was then left off; their own Talmud telling us,¹ that "since our old Rabban Gamaliel died, the honour of the law was perished, purity and pharisaism were destroyed:" which the gloss thus explains, "that whilst he lived, men were sound, and studied the law standing; but he being dead, weakness crept into the world, and they were forced to sit."

VI. Under the tuition of this great master, St. Paul was educated in the knowledge of the law, wherein he made such quick and vast improvements, that he soon outstripped his fellow-disciples." Amongst the various sects at that time in the Jewish church, he was especially educated in the principles and institutions of the Pharisees: of which sect was both his father and his master, whereof he became a most earnest and zealous professor; this being, as himself tells us, the "strictest sect of their religion." For the understanding whereof, it may not be amiss a little to inquire into the temper and manners of this sect. Josephus,² though himself a Pharisee, gives this character of them: that "they were a crafty and subtle generation of men, and so perverse, even to princes themselves, that they would not fear many times openly to affront and oppose them." And so far had they insinuated themselves into the affections and estimations of the populacy,³ that their good or ill word was enough to make or blast any one with the people, who would implicitly believe them, let their report be never so false or malicious: and therefore Alexander Jannæus, when he lay a dying, wisely advised his queen by all means to comply with them, and to seem to govern by their counsel and direction; affirming that this had been the greatest cause of his fatal miscarriage, and that which

¹ Sotah. c. 9. halac. 15. apud Lightf. Hor. H. in Matt. xiii. 2.

² Gal. i. 14.

³ Antiq. Jud. l. xvii. c. 3.

⁴ Id. ibid. l. xiii. c. 23.

had derived the odium of the nation upon him, that he had offended this sort of men. Certain it is, that they were infinitely proud and insolent, surly and ill-natured ; that they hated all mankind but themselves, and censured whoever would not be of their way, as a villain and reprobate ; greatly zealous to gather proselytes to their party, not to make them more religious, but more fierce and cruel, more carping and censorious, more heady and high-minded ; in short, “ twofold more the children of the devil than they were before.” All religion and kindness was confined within the bounds of their own party, and the first principles wherewith they inspired their new converts were, that none but they were the godly party, and that all other persons were slaves and sons of the earth ; and therefore especially endeavoured to inspire them with a mighty zeal and fierceness against all that differed from them, so that if any one did but speak a good word of our Saviour, he should be presently excommunicated and cast out, persecuted and devoted to the death. To this end they were wont not only to separate, but discriminate themselves from the herd and community, by some peculiar notes and badges of distinction ; such as their long robes, broad phylacteries, and their large fringes and borders of their garments, whereby they made themselves known from the rest of men. These dogged and ill-natured principles, together with their seditious, unnatural, unjust, unmerciful, and uncharitable behaviour, which otherwise would have made them stink above ground in the nostrils of men, they sought to palliate and varnish over with a more than ordinary pretence and profession of religion : but were especially active and diligent in what cost them little, the outward instances of religion, such duties especially as did more immediately refer to God ; as frequent fasting and praying, which they did very often and very long, with demure and mortified looks, in a whining and an affected tone, and this almost in every corner of the streets ; and, indeed, so contrived the scheme of their religion, that what they did might appear above ground, where they might be seen of men to the best advantage.

VII. Though this seems to have been the general temper and disposition of the party, yet doubtless there were some amongst them of better and honester principles than the rest. In which number we have just reason to reckon our apostle : who yet was

deeply leavened with the active and fiery genius of the sect ; not able to brook any opposite party in religion, especially if late and novel. Insomuch that when the Jews were resolved to do execution upon Stephen, he stood by and kept the clothes of them that did it. Whether he was any farther engaged in the death of this innocent and good man, we do not find. However this was enough loudly to proclaim his approbation and consent ; and therefore elsewhere we find him indicting himself for this fact, and pleading guilty : “ when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.”² God chiefly inspects the heart, and if the vote be passed there, writes the man guilty, though he stir no farther. It is easy to murder another by a silent wish, or a passionate desire. In all moral actions God values the will for the deed, and reckons the man a companion in the sin, who, though possibly he may never actually join in it, does yet inwardly applaud and like it. The storm, thus begun, increased apace, and a violent persecution began to arise, which miserably afflicted and dispersed the Christians at Jerusalem : in which our apostle was a prime agent and minister, raging about in all parts with a mad and ungovernable zeal, searching out the saints, beating them in the synagogues, compelling many to blaspheme, imprisoning others, and procuring them to be put to death. Indeed, he was a kind of *inquisitor hæreticæ pravitatis* to the high-priest, by whom he was employed to hunt and find out these upstart heretics, who preached against the law of Moses and the traditions of the fathers. Accordingly, having made strange havoc at Jerusalem,^a he addressed himself to the Sanhedrim, and there took out a warrant and commission to go down and ransack the synagogues at Damascus. How eternally insatiable is fury and a misguided zeal ! how restless and unwearied in its designs of cruelty ! It had already sufficiently harassed the poor Christians at Jerusalem, but not content to have vexed them there, and to have driven them thence, it persecuted them unto strange cities, following them even to Damascus itself, whither many of these persecuted Christians had fled for shelter, resolving to bring up those whom he found there to Jerusalem, in order to their punishment and execution. For the Jewish Sanhedrim had not only power of seizing and

² Acts xxii. 20.

^a Acts ix. 1.

scourging offenders against their law within the bounds of their own country, but, by the connivance and favour of the Romans, might send into other countries, where there were any synagogues that acknowledged a dependence in religious matters upon the council at Jerusalem, to apprehend them; as here they sent Paul to Damascus to fetch up what Christians he could find, to be arraigned and sentenced at Jerusalem.

VIII. But God, who had designed him for work of another nature, and "separated him from his mother's womb to the preaching of the gospel,"^b stopped him in his journey. For while he was, together with his company, travelling on the road, not far from Damascus, on a sudden a gleam of light, beyond the splendour and brightness of the sun, was darted from heaven upon them, whereat being strangely amazed and confounded, they all fell to the ground, a voice calling to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" To which he replied, "Lord, who art thou?" Who told him, that "he was Jesus whom he persecuted;" that what was done to the members was done to the head; that it was hard for him to kick against the pricks; that he now appeared to him, to make choice of him for a minister, and a witness of what he had now seen, and should after hear; that he would stand by him, and preserve him, and make him a great instrument in the conversion of the Gentile world. This said, he asked our Lord, what he would have him to do; who bade him go into the city, where he should receive his answer. St. Paul's companions, who had been present at this transaction, heard the voice,^c but saw not him that spoke to him: though elsewhere the apostle himself affirms, that they saw the light, but heard not the voice of him that spake; that is, they heard a confused sound, but not a distinct and articulate voice; or, more probably, being ignorant of the Hebrew language, wherein our Lord spake to St. Paul, they heard the words, but knew not the sense and the meaning of them.

IX. St. Paul by this time was gotten up; but though he found his feet, yet he had lost his eyes, being stricken blind with the extraordinary brightness of the light, and was accordingly led by his companions into Damascus: in which condition he there remained, fasting three days together. At this time, we may probably suppose it was, that he had that vision and ecstasy,

^b Gal. i. 15.

^c Acts xxii. 9.

wherein he was taken up into the "third heaven,"^d where he saw and heard things great and unutterable, and was fully instructed in the mysteries of the gospel, and hence expressly affirms, that he was not "taught the gospel which he preached by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."^e There was at this time at Damascus one Ananias, a very devout and religious man, (one of the seventy disciples, as the ancients inform us, and probably the first planter of the Christian church in this city,) and though a Christian, yet of great reputation amongst all the Jews. To him our Lord appeared, commanding him to go into such a street, and to such an house, and there inquire for one Saul of Tarsus, who was now at prayer, and had seen him in a vision coming to him, to lay his hands upon him, that he might receive his sight. Ananias started at the name of the man, having heard of his bloody temper and practices, and upon what errand he was now come down to the city. But our Lord, to take off his fears, told him, that he mistook the man; that he had now taken him to be a chosen vessel, to preach the gospel both to Jews and Gentiles, and before the greatest potentates upon earth, acquainting him with what great things he should both do and suffer for his sake, what chains and imprisonments, what racks and scourges, what hunger and thirst, what shipwrecks and death he should undergo. Upon this, Ananias went, laid his hands upon him, told him that our Lord had sent him to him, that he might receive his sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost; which was no sooner done, but thick films like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight returned. And the next thing he did was to be baptized, and solemnly initiated into the Christian faith: after which he joined himself to the disciples of that place, to the equal joy and wonder of the church, that the wolf should so soon lay down its fierceness, and put on the meek nature of a lamb; that he who had lately been so violent a persecutor, should now become not a professor only, but a preacher of that faith which before he had routed and destroyed.

^d 2 Cor. xii. 1.^e Gal. i. 10, 11.

SECTION II.

OF ST. PAUL, FROM HIS CONVERSION TILL THE COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM.

St. Paul's leaving Damascus, and why. His three years ministry in Arabia. His return to Damascus. The greatness of that city. The design of the Jews to surprise St. Paul, and the manner of his escape. His coming to Jerusalem, and converse with Peter and James. His departure thence. The disciples first styled Christians at Antioch. This when done, and by whom. The solemnity of it. The importance of the word *χρηματίζω*. *Χρηματισμὸς Ἀντιοχείων*, what. St. Paul's journey to Jerusalem with contributions. His voyage to Cyprus, and planting Christianity there. The opposition made by Elymas, and his severe punishment. The proconsul's conversion. His preaching to the Jews at Antioch of Pisidia. His curing a cripple at Lystra; and discourse to the people about their idolatry. The apostle's way of arguing noted; and his discourse concerning the Being and Providence of God illustrated. His confirming the churches in the faith. The controversy at Antioch; and St. Paul's account of it in the synod at Jerusalem.

ST. PAUL stayed not long at Damascus after his conversion, but having received an immediate intimation from heaven, probably in the ecstasy wherein he was caught up thither, he waited for no other counsel or direction in the case, lest he should seem to derive his mission and authority from men; and "being not disobedient to the heavenly vision," he presently retired out of the city; and the sooner, probably to decline the odium of the Jews, and the effects of that rage and malice which he was sure would pursue and follow him. He withdrew into the parts of Arabia,^f (those parts of it that lay next to the *χώρα Δαμασκήνη*, the "region of Damascus;" nay, Damascus itself was sometimes accounted part of Arabia, as we shall note by-and-by from Tertullian,) where he spent the first fruits of his ministry, preaching up and down for three years together. After which he returned back to Damascus, preached openly in the synagogues, and convinced the Jews of Christ's Messiahship, and the truth of his religion. Angry and enraged hereat, they resolved his ruin, which they knew no better way to effect, than by exasperating and incensing the civil powers against him.^g Damascus was a place not more venerable for its antiquity, (if not built by, at least it gave title to Abraham's steward, hence called "Eliezer of Damascus,") than it was considerable for its strength, stateliness, and situation: it was the noblest city of all Syria, (as Justin of

^f Gal. i. 17, 18.^g Acts ix. 23. 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33.

old^h and the Arabian geographer has since informed us,ⁱ and the prophet Isaiah,^j before both, calls it, ראש ארם, "the head of Syria," seated in a most healthful air, in a most fruitful soil, watered with most pleasant fountains and rivers, rich in merchandise, adorned with stately buildings, goodly and magnificent temples, and fortified with strong guards and garrisons: in all which respects Julian calls it the holy and great Damascus;^k καὶ τὸν τῆς Ἑφάσης ὀφθαλμὸν, "the eye of the whole East." Situate it was between Libanus and Mount Hermon, and though properly belonging to Syria, yet *Arabixæ retro deputabatur*, (as Tertullian tells us,^l) was anciently reckoned to Arabia. Accordingly at this time it was under the government of Aretas, (father-in-law to Herod Antipas the tetrarch, whose daughter the said Herod had married, but afterwards turned off,^m which became the occasion of a war between those two princes,) king of Arabia Petræa, a prince tributary to the Roman empire. By him there was an ἐθνάρχης, or governor, who had jurisdiction over the whole Syria Damascena, placed over it, who kept constant residence in the city, as a place of very great importance. To him the Jews made their address, with crafty and cunning insinuations persuading him to apprehend St. Paul, possibly under the notion of a spy, there being war at this time between the Romans and that king. Hereupon the gates were shut, and extraordinary guards set, and all engines that could be laid to take him. But the disciples, to prevent their cruel designs, at night put him into a basket, and let him down over the city wall. And the place, we are told,ⁿ is still shewed to travellers, not far from the gate, thence called St. Paul's Gate at this day.

II. Having thus made his escape, he set forwards for Jerusalem, where, when he arrived, he addressed himself to the church.^o But they, knowing the former temper and principles of the man, universally shunned his company; till Barnabas brought him to Peter, who was not yet cast into prison, and to James our Lord's brother, bishop of Jerusalem, acquainting them with the manner of his conversion, and by them he was familiarly entertained.

^h Just. l. xxxvi. c. 2.

^j Isai. vii. 7.

^k Adv. Marc. l. iii. c. 13.

^l G. Sion. et J. Hesron. de Urb. Orient. c. 4.

ⁱ Geograph. Nub. Clim. iii. par. v. p. 116.

^k Epist. xxiv. p. 145.

^m Vid. Joseph. Antiq. l. xviii. c. 7.

^o Acts ix. 26. Gal. i. 18, 19.

Here he stayed fifteen days, preaching Christ, and confuting the Hellenist Jews with a mighty courage and resolution. But snares were here again laid to entrap him, as malice can as well cease to be, as to be restless and active. Whereupon he was warned by God in a vision, that his testimony would not find acceptance in that place; that therefore he should leave it, and betake himself to the Gentiles. Accordingly, being conducted by the brethren to Cæsarea,^p he set sail for Tarsus, his native city, from whence, not long after, he was fetched by Barnabas to Antioch, to assist him in propagating Christianity in that place: in which employment they continued there a whole year.^q And now it was that the disciples of the religion were at this place first called Christians; according to the manner of all other institutions, who were wont to take their denominations from the first authors and founders of them. Before this they were usually styled Nazarenes,^r as being the disciples and followers of Jesus of Nazareth, a name by which the Jews in scorn call them to this day, with the same intent that the Gentiles of old used to call them Galileans. The name of Nazarenes was henceforward fixed upon those Jewish converts who mixed the law and the gospel, and compounded a religion out of Judaism and Christianity. The fixing this honourable name upon the disciples of the crucified Jesus was done at Antioch (as an ancient historian informs us^s) about the beginning of Claudius's reign, ten years after Christ's ascension; nay, he farther adds, that Euodius, lately ordained bishop of that place, was the person that imposed this name upon them, styling them Christians, who before were called Nazarenes and Galileans: τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐπισκόπου Εὐδοίου προσομιλήσαντος αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἐπιθήσαντος αὐτοῖς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦτο· πρώην γὰρ Ναζαραῖοι ἐκαλοῦντο, καὶ Γαλιλαῖοι ἐκαλοῦντο οἱ Χριστιανοί, as my author's words are. I may not omit, what a learned man has observed,^t that the word *χρηματίσαι*, used by St. Luke, "they were called," implies the thing to have been done by some public and solemn act and declaration of the whole church, such being the use of the word in the imperial edicts and proclamations of those times, the

^p Acts ix. 30.^q Acts xi. 26.^r Euseb. de loc. Hebr. in voc. *Ναζαρεθ*.^s Joan. Antiochen. in Chronol. MS. a Selden. cit. de Synedr. l. i. c. 8. Vid. Suid. in voc. *Ναζαραῖος*.^t J. Greg. not. et obs. cap. 36.

emperors being said *χρηματίζειν*, “to style themselves,” when they publicly proclaimed by what titles they would be called. When any province submitted itself to the Roman empire, the emperor was wont, by public edict, *χρηματίζειν ἑαυτὸν*, “to entitle himself” to the government and jurisdiction of it, and the people to several great privileges and immunities. In a grateful sense whereof the people usually made this time the solemn date of their common *epocha*, or computation: thus (as the forementioned historian informs us”) it was in the particular case of Antioch; and thence their public era was called *χρηματισμὸς τῶν Ἀντιοχείων*, “the ascription of the people at Antioch.” Such being the general acceptance of the word, St. Luke (who was himself a native of this city) makes use of it to express that solemn declaration, whereby the disciples of the religion entitled themselves to the name of Christians.

III. It happened about this time that a terrible famine, foretold by Agabus,^x afflicted several parts of the Roman empire, but especially Judea; the consideration whereof made the Christians at Antioch compassionate the case of their suffering brethren, and accordingly they raised considerable contributions for their relief and succour, which they sent to Jerusalem by Barnabas and Paul, who, having despatched their errand in that city, went back to Antioch; where, while they were joining in the public exercises of their religion, it was revealed to them by the Holy Ghost,^y that they should set apart Paul and Barnabas to preach the gospel in other places: which was done accordingly; and they, by prayer, fasting, and imposition of hands, immediately deputed for that service. Hence they departed to Seleucia, and thence sailed to Cyprus, where at Salamis, a great city in that island, they preached in the synagogues of the Jews: hence they removed to Paphos, the residence of Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of the island, a man of great wisdom and prudence, but miserably seduced by the wicked artifices of Bar-Jesus, a Jewish impostor, who called himself Elymas, or the Magician, vehemently opposed the apostles, and kept the proconsul from embracing of the faith. Nay, one,^z who pretends to be ancient enough to know it, seems to intimate, that he not only spake, but wrote against St. Paul’s doctrine and the faith of Christ. However, the pro-

^u J. Antioch. Chron. l. ix.

^x Acts xi. 28.

^y Acts xiii. 2.

^z Dionys. Areop. de divin. nomin. c. 8.

consul calls for the apostles, and St. Paul first takes Elymas to task, and having severely checked him for his malicious opposing of the truth, told him, that the divine vengeance was now ready to seize upon him ; upon which he was immediately struck blind. The vengeance of God observing herein a kind of just proportion, that he should be punished with the loss of his bodily eyes, who had so wilfully and maliciously shut the eyes of his mind against the light of the gospel, and had endeavoured to keep not only himself but others under so much blindness and darkness. This miracle turned the scale with the proconsul, and quickly brought him over a convert to the faith.

IV. After this success in Cyprus, he went to Perga in Pamphylia,* where taking Titus along with him in the room of Mark, who was returned to Jerusalem, they went to Antioch, the metropolis of Pisidia ; where entering into the Jewish synagogue on the sabbath day, after some sections of the law were read, they were invited by the rulers of the synagogue to discourse a little to the people : which St. Paul did, in a large and eloquent sermon, wherein he put them in mind of the many great and particular blessings which God had heaped upon the Jews, from the first originals of that nation ; that he had crowned them all, with the sending of his Son to be the Messiah and the Saviour ; that though the Jews had ignorantly crucified this just, innocent person, yet that God, according to his own predictions, had raised him up from the dead ; that through him they preached forgiveness of sins ; and that by him alone it was that men, if ever, must be justified and acquitted from that guilt and condemnation, which all the pompous ceremonies and ministries of the Mosaic law could never do away ; that therefore they should do well to take heed, lest by their opposing this way of salvation, they should bring upon themselves that prophetic curse which God had threatened to the Jews of old, for their great contumacy and neglect. This sermon wanted not its due effects : the proselyte Jews desired the apostles to discourse again to them of this matter the next sabbath day, the apostles also persuading them to continue firm in the belief of these things. The day was no sooner come, but the whole city almost flocked to be their auditors : which when the Jews saw, acted by a spirit of envy, they began to blaspheme and to contradict the apostles ;

* Acts xiii. 13, 14.

who, nothing daunted, told them that our Lord had charged them first to preach the gospel to the Jews, which since they so obstinately rejected, they were now to address themselves to the Gentiles : who hearing this, exceedingly rejoiced at the good news, and magnified the word of God, and as many of them as were thus prepared and disposed towards eternal life, heartily closed with it and embraced it ; the apostles preaching not there only, but through the country round about. The Jews, more exasperated than before, resolved to be rid of their company, and to that end persuaded some of the more devout and honourable women to deal with their husbands, persons of prime rank and quality in the city, by whose means they were driven out of those parts. Whereat Paul and Barnabas, shaking off the dust of their feet as a testimony against their ingratitude and infidelity, departed from them.

V. The next place they went to was Iconium,^b where at first they found kind entertainment and good success, God setting a seal to their doctrine by the testimony of his miracles. But here the Jewish malice began again to ferment, exciting the people to sedition and a mutiny against them : insomuch that hearing of a design to stone them, they seasonably withdrew to Lystra ; where they first made their way by a miraculous cure : for St. Paul seeing an impotent cripple that had been lame from his mother's womb, cured him with the speaking of a word. The people who beheld the miracle, had so much natural logic as to infer, that there was a divinity in the thing ; though mistaking the author, they applied it to the instruments, crying out, that the gods in human shape were come down from heaven : Paul, as being chief speaker, they termed Mercury, the god of speech and eloquence ; Barnabas, by reason of his age and gravity, they called Jupiter, the father of their gods : accordingly the Syriac interpreter here renders Jupiter by "the lord, or sovereign of the gods." The fame of this being spread over the city, the priest of Jupiter brought oxen dressed up with garlands, after the Gentile rites, to the house where the apostles were, to do sacrifice to them : which they no sooner understood, but in detestation of those undue honours offered to them, they rent their clothes, and told them that they were men of the same make and temper, of the same passions and infirmities with themselves ;

^b Acts xiv. 1.

that the design of their preaching was to convert them from these vain idolatries and superstitions to the worship of the true God, the great Parent of the world, who though heretofore he had left men to themselves, to go on in their own ways of idolatrous worship, yet had he given sufficient evidence of himself in the constant returns of a gracious and benign providence in crowning the year with fruitful seasons, and other acts of common kindness and bounty to mankind.

VI. A short discourse, but very rational and convictive, which it may not be amiss a little more particularly to consider, and the method which the apostle uses to convince these blind idolaters. He proves divine honours to be due to God alone, as the sovereign Being of the world; and that there is such a supreme infinite Being, he argues from his works both of creation and providence.^c Creation: "He is the living God that made heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are therein." Providence: "He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness:" than which no argument can be more apt and proper to work upon the minds of men. "That which may be known of God is manifest to the Gentiles, for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, even his eternal power and godhead, are clearly seen and understood by the things that are made:" it being impossible impartially to survey the several parts of the creation, and not see in every place evident footsteps of an infinite wisdom, power, and goodness. Who can look up unto the heavens, and not there discern an Almighty Wisdom, beautifully garnishing those upper regions, distinguishing the circuits, and perpetuating the motions of the heavenly lights? placing the sun in the middle of the heavens, that he might equally dispense and communicate his light and heat to all parts of the world, and not burn the earth with the too near approach of his scorching beams: by which means the creatures are refreshed and cheered, the earth impregnated with fruits and flowers by the benign influence of a vital heat, and the vicissitudes and seasons of the year regularly distinguished by their constant and orderly revolutions. Whence are the great orbs of heaven kept in continual motion, always going in the same tract, but

^c Arrian. dissert. l. i. c. 16.

because there is a superior power that keeps these great wheels a going? Who is it that "poises the balancings of the clouds; that divides a water-course for the overflowing of waters, and a way for the lightning of the thunder?" Who can "bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?" Or who can "bring forth Mazaroth in his season, or guide Arcturus with his sons?" Do these come by chance? or by the secret appointment of Infinite Wisdom? Who can consider the admirable thinness and purity of the air, its immediate subserviency to the great ends of the creation, its being the treasury of vital breath to all living creatures, without which the next moment must put a period to our days, and not reflect upon that Divine Wisdom that contrived it? If we come down upon the earth, there we discover a Divine Providence, supporting it with the pillars of an invisible power, "stretching the north over the empty space, and hanging the earth upon nothing;" filling it with great variety of admirable and useful creatures, and maintaining them all according to their kinds at his own cost and charges. It is he that clothes the grass with a delightful verdure, that "crowns the year with his loving kindness, and makes the valleys stand thick with corn;" "that causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart;" that beautifies the lilies that neither toil nor spin, and that with a glory that outshines Solomon in all his pomp and grandeur. From land let us ship our observations to sea, and there we may descry the wise effects of infinite understanding: a wide ocean fitly disposed for the mutual commerce and correspondence of one part of mankind with another; filled with great and admirable fishes, and enriched with the treasures of the deep. What but an almighty arm can shut in the sea with doors, bind it by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass, and tie up its wild raging waves with no stronger cordage than ropes of sand? Who but he commands the storm, and stills the tempest; and brings the mariner, when at his wits end in the midst of the greatest dangers, to his desired haven? "They that go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep." So impossible is it for a man to stand in any part of the creation,

wherein he may not discern evidences enough of an infinitely wise, gracious, and omnipotent Being. Thus much I thought good to add, to illustrate the apostle's argument; whence he strongly infers, that it is very reasonable that we should worship and adore this great Creator and Benefactor, and not transfer the honours due to him alone upon men of frail and sinful passions, and much less upon dumb idols, unable either to make or to help themselves: an argument, which though very plain and plausible, and adapted to the meanest understandings, yet was all little enough to restrain the people from offering sacrifice to them. But how soon was the wind turned into another corner? The old spirit of the Jews did still haunt and pursue them: who, coming from Antioch and Iconium, exasperated and stirred up the multitude; and they who just before accounted them as gods, used them now worse, not only than ordinary men, but slaves. For in a mighty rage they fall upon St. Paul, stone him, as they thought, dead, and then drag him out of the city; whither the Christians of that place coming, probably to inter him, he suddenly revived, and rose up amongst them, and the next day went thence to Derbe.

VII. Here they preached the gospel, and then returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia, confirming the Christians of those places in the belief and profession of Christianity; earnestly persuading them to persevere, and not be discouraged with those troubles and persecutions which they must expect would attend the profession of the gospel. And that all this might succeed the better, with fasting and prayer they ordained governors and pastors in every church; and having recommended them to the grace of God, departed from them. From hence they passed through Pisidia, and thence came to Pamphylia; and having preached to the people at Perga, they went down to Attalia. And thus having at this time finished the whole circuit of their ministry, they returned back to Antioch in Syria, the place whence they had first set out. Here they acquainted the church with the various transactions and successes of their travels, and how great a door had hereby been opened to the conversion of the Gentile world.

VIII. While St. Paul stayed at Antioch, there arose that famous controversy about the observation of the Mosaic rites,^d

^d Acts xv. 1.

set on foot and brought in by some Jewish converts that came down thither, whereby great disturbances and distractions were made in the minds of the people: for the composing whereof the church of Antioch resolved to send Paul and Barnabas to consult with the apostles and church at Jerusalem. In their way thither, they declared to the brethren as they went along, what success they had had in the conversion of the Gentiles. Being come to Jerusalem, they first addressed themselves to Peter, James, and John, the pillars and principal persons in that place: by whom they were kindly entertained, and admitted to the right hand of fellowship. And perceiving, by the account which St. Paul gave them, that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to him, as that of the circumcision was to Peter, they ratified it by compact and agreement, that Peter should preach to the Jews, and Paul unto the Gentiles. Hereupon a council was summoned, wherein Peter having declared his sense of things, Paul and Barnabas acquainted them what great things God by their ministry had done among the Gentiles. A plain evidence, that though uncircumcised they were accepted by God, as well as the Jews with all their legal rites and privileges. The issue of the debate was, that the Gentiles were not under the obligation of the law of Moses, and that therefore some persons of their own should be joined with Paul and Barnabas, to carry the canons and decrees of the council down to Antioch, for their fuller satisfaction in this matter. But of this affair we shall give the reader a more distinct and particular account in another place.

SECTION III.

OF ST. PAUL, FROM THE TIME OF THE SYNOD AT JERUSALEM
TILL HIS DEPARTURE FROM ATHENS.

St. Paul's carrying the apostolic decree to Antioch. His contest with Peter. The dissension between him and Barnabas. His travels to confirm the new planted churches. The conversion of Lydia at Philippi. The Jewish *proseucha*, what; the frequency of them in all places. The dispossessing of a Pythoness. St. Paul's imprisonment and ill usage at Philippi. The great provision made by the Roman laws for the security of its subjects. His preaching at Thessalonica and Berea. His going to Athens. The fame of that place. His doctrine opposed by the Stoics and Epicureans, and why.

The great idolatry and superstition of that city. The altar to the Unknown God. This Unknown God, who. The superstition of the Jews in concealing the name of God. This imitated by the Gentiles. Their general forms of invoking their deities noted. The particular occasion of these altars at Athens, whence. St. Paul's discourse to the philosophers in the Areopagus concerning the Divine Being and Providence. The different entertainment of his doctrine. Dionysius the Areopagite, who. His learning, conversion, and being made bishop of Athens. The difference between him and St. Denys of Paris. The books published under his name.

St. PAUL and his companions having received the decretal epistle, returned back to Antioch ; where they had not been long, before Peter came thither to them ; and, according to the decree of the council, freely and inoffensively conversed with the Gentiles : till some of the Jews coming down thither from Jerusalem, he withdrew his converse, as if it were a thing unwarrantable and unlawful. By which means the minds of many were dissatisfied, and their consciences very much ensnared. Whereat St. Paul being exceedingly troubled, publicly rebuked him for it, and that, as the case required, with great sharpness and severity. It was not long after, that St. Paul and Barnabas resolved upon visiting the churches,* which they had lately planted among the Gentiles : to which end Barnabas determined to take his cousin Mark along with them. This, Paul would by no means agree to, he having deserted them in their former journey. A little spark, which yet kindled a great feud and dissension between these two good men, and arose to that height, that in some discontent they parted from each other. So natural is it for the best of men sometimes to indulge an unwarrantable passion, and so far to espouse the interest of a private and particular humour, as rather to hazard the great law of charity, and violate the bands of friendship, than to recede from it. The effect was, Barnabas, taking his nephew, went for Cyprus, his native country ; St. Paul made choice of Silas, and the success of his undertaking being first recommended to the divine care and goodness, they set forwards on their journey.

II. Their first passage was into Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches as they went along : and to that end they left with them copies of the synodical decrees, lately ordained in the council at Jerusalem. Hence we may suppose it was that he set sail for Crete, where he preached and propagated Christianity, and constituted Titus to be the first bishop and pastor of that

* Acts xv. 36.

island, whom he left there to settle and dispose those affairs which the shortness of his own stay in those parts would not suffer him to do. Hence he returned back into Cilicia, and came to Lystra, where he found Timothy, whose father was a Greek, his mother a Jewish convert, by whom he had been brought up under all the advantages of a pious and religious education, and especially an incomparable skill and dexterity in the holy scriptures. St. Paul designed him for the companion of his travels, and a special instrument in the ministry of the gospel: and knowing that his being uncircumcised would be a mighty prejudice in the opinion and estimation of the Jews, caused him to be circumcised; being willing in lawful and indifferent matters (such was circumcision now become) to accommodate himself to men's humours and apprehensions for the saving of their souls.

III. From hence with his company he passed through Phrygia,^f and the country of Galatia, where he was entertained by them with as mighty a kindness and veneration, as if he had been an angel immediately sent from heaven. And being by revelation forbidden to go into Asia, by a second vision he was commanded to direct his journey for Macedonia: and here it was that St. Luke joined himself to his company, and became ever after his inseparable companion. Sailing from Troas, they arrived at the island Samothracia, and thence to Neapolis, from whence they went to Philippi, the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a Roman colony: where he stayed some considerable time to plant the Christian faith, and where his ministry had more particular success on Lydia, a purple-seller, born at Thyatira, baptized together with her whole family; and with her the apostle sojourned during his residence in that place. A little without this city there was a *proseucha*, as the Syriac renders it, an "oratory," or "house of prayer," whereto the apostle and his company used frequently to retire, for the exercise of their religion, and for preaching the gospel to those that resorted thither. The Jews had three sorts of places for their public worship: the temple at Jerusalem, which was like the cathedral, or mother-church, where all sacrifices and oblations were offered, and where all males were bound three times a year personally to pay their devotion: their synagogues, (many whereof they had almost in every place, not unlike our parochial churches,)

^f Acts xvi. 6.

where the scriptures were read and expounded, and the people taught their duty: "Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every sabbath day."^s And then they had their *proseuchæ*, (τὰ κατὰ πολεῖς προσευκτήρια, as Philo sometimes calls them,^h) or "oratories," which were like chapels of ease to the temple and the synagogues, whither the people were wont to come solemnly to offer up their prayers to heaven. They were built (as Epiphanius informs usⁱ) ἔξω τῆς πόλεως, ἐν ἀέρι καὶ αἰθρίῳ τόπῳ, "without the city, in the open air and uncovered," τόποι πλατεῖς φόρων δίκην, προσευχὰς ταύτας ἐκάλουν, "being large spacious places, after the manner of *fora*, or market-places, and these they called *proseuchæ*."^k And that the Jews and Samaritans had such places of devotion, he proves from this very place at Philippi, where St. Paul preached: for they had them not in Judea only, but even at Rome itself, where Tiberius (as Philo tells Caius the emperor^l) suffered the Jews to inhabit the Transtyberine region, and undisturbedly to live according to the rites of their institutions, καὶ προσευχὰς ἔχειν, καὶ συνιέναι εἰς αὐτὰς, καὶ μάλιστα ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς ἐβδόμαις, ὅτε δημοσίᾳ τὴν πάτριον παιδεύονται φιλοσοφίαν, "and also to have their *proseuchæ*, and to meet in them, especially upon their holy sabbaths, that they might be familiarly instructed in the laws and religion of their country." Such they had also in other places, especially where they had not, or were not suffered to have synagogues for their public worship. But to return.

IV. As they were going to this oratory, they were often followed by a Pythoness, a maid servant, acted by a spirit of divination, who openly cried out, that "these men were the servants of the most high God, who came to shew the way of salvation" to the world: so easily can heaven extort a testimony from the mouth of hell. But St. Paul, to shew how little he needed Satan to be his witness, commanded the demon to come out; which immediately left her. The evil spirit thus thrown out of possession, presently raised a storm against the apostles; for the masters of the damsel, who used by her diabolical arts to

^s Acts xv. 21.

^h De vit. Mos. l. iii. p. 685.

ⁱ Hæres. lxxx. c. 1.

^k In qua te quæro Proseucha? Juvenal. Satyr. iii. 296. Proseucha] locus Judæorum, ubi oranti Vet. Schol. ibid.

^l De Legat. ad Caium, p. 1014.

raise great advantages to themselves, being sensible that now their gainful trade was spoiled, resolved to be revenged on them that had spoiled it. Accordingly, they laid hold upon them, and dragged them before the seat of judicature, insinuating to the governors that these men were Jews, who sought to introduce different customs and ways of worship, contrary to the laws of the Roman empire. The magistrates and people were soon agreed, the one to give sentence, the other to set upon the execution. In fine, they were stripped, beaten, and then commanded to be thrown into prison, and the gaoler charged to keep them with all possible care and strictness; who, to make sure of his charge, thrust them into the inner dungeon, and made their feet fast in the stocks. But a good man can turn a prison into a chapel, and make a "den of thieves" to be "an house of prayer:" our feet cannot be bound so fast to the earth, but that still our hearts may mount up to heaven. At midnight the apostles were overheard by their fellow-prisoners praying and singing hymns to God. But after the still voice came the tempest: an earthquake suddenly shook the foundations of the prison, the doors flew open, and their chains fell off. The gaoler awaking with this amazing accident, concluded with himself that the prisoners were fled, and to prevent the sentence of public justice, was going to lay violent hands upon himself,^m which St. Paul espying, called out to him to hold his hand, and told him they were all there: who thereupon came in to them, with a greater earthquake in his own conscience, and falling down before them, asked them, "what he should do to be saved?" They told him there was no other way of salvation for him or his, than an hearty and sincere embracing of the faith of Christ. What a happy change does Christianity make in the minds of men! how plain does it smooth the roughest tempers, and instil the sweetest principles of civility and good nature! He who but a little before had tyrannized over the apostles with the most merciless and cruel usage, began now to treat them with all the arts of kindness and charity, bringing them out of the dungeon, and washing their stripes and wounds; and being more fully instructed in the principles of Christianity, was, together with his whole family, immediately baptized by them. Early in the

^m *Milites si amiserint custodias, ipsi in periculum deducuntur, l. xii. ff. de custod. et exhib. reor. tit. iii.*

morning, the magistrates sent officers privately to release them : which the apostles refused ; telling them, that they were not only innocent persons, but Romans ; that they had been illegally condemned and beaten ; that therefore their delivery should be as public as the injury, and an open vindication of their innocency ; and that they themselves that had sent them thither should fetch them thence : for the Roman government was very tender of the lives and liberties of its own subjects,ⁿ those especially that were free denizens of Rome ; every injury offered to a Roman being looked upon as an affront against the majesty of the whole people of Rome. Such a one might not be beaten : but to be scourged, or bound, without being first legally heard and tried, was not only against the Roman, but the laws of all nations ; and the more public any injury was,^o the greater was its aggravation, and the laws required a more strict and solemn reparation. St. Paul, who was a Roman, and very well understood the laws and privileges of Rome, insisted upon this, to the great startling and affrighting of the magistrates ; who, sensible of their error, came to the prison and entreated them to depart. Whereupon, going to Lydia's house, and having saluted and encouraged the brethren, they departed from that place.

V. Leaving Philippi, they came next to Thessalonica, the metropolis of Macedonia ; where Paul, according to his custom, presently went to the Jewish synagogue for three sabbath days, reasoning and disputing with them, proving, from the predictions of the Old Testament, that the Messiah was to suffer, and to rise again, and that the blessed Jesus was this Messiah. Great numbers, especially of religious proselytes, were converted by his preaching : while, like the sun, that melts wax but hardens clay, it wrought a quite contrary effect in the unbelieving Jews ; who presently set themselves to blow up the city into a tumult and an uproar, and missing St. Paul (who had withdrawn himself) they fell foul upon Jason, in whose house he lodged ; representing to the magistrates, that they were enemies to Cæsar, and sought

ⁿ *Ista laus primum est majorum nostrorum, Quirites, qui lenitate legum vestram libertatem munitam esse voluerunt. Quamobrem inviolatum corpus omnium civium Romanorum integrum libertatis defendo servari oportere. Porcia Lex virgas ab omnium civium Rom. corpore amovit. C. Gracchus legem tulit, ne de capite civium Rom. injussu vestro judicaretur.*—Cicer. Orat. pro C. Rabir.

^o *L. vii. ff. de injuriis. l. xlix. tit. 10.*

to undermine the peace and prosperity of the Roman empire. At night, Paul and Silas were conducted by the brethren to Berea; where, going to the synagogue, they found the people of a more noble and generous, a more pliable and ingenuous temper, ready to entertain the Christian doctrine, but yet not willing to take it merely upon the apostle's word, till they had first compared his preaching with what the scriptures say of the Messiah and his doctrine. And the success was answerable, in those great numbers that came over to them. But the Jewish malice pursued them still: for hearing at Thessalonica what entertainment they had found in this place, they presently came down, to exasperate and stir up the people: to avoid which, St. Paul, leaving Silas and Timothy behind him, thought good to withdraw himself from that place.

VI. From Berea he went to Athens,^p one of the most renowned cities in the world, excelling all others (says an ancient historian^q) in antiquity, humanity, and learning. Indeed, it was the great seat of arts and learning, and, as Cicero will have it,^r the fountain whence civility, learning, religion, arts, and laws were derived into all other nations. So universally flocked to by all that had but the least kindness for the Muses, or good manners, that he who had not seen Athens, was accounted a block; he who having seen it, was not in love with it, a dull stupid ass; and he who after he had seen it, could be willing to leave it, fit for nothing but to be a pack-horse.^s Here, among the several sects of philosophers, he had more particular contests with the Stoics and Epicureans, who beyond all the rest seemed enemies to Christianity. The Epicureans, because they found their pleasant and jovial humour, and their loose and exorbitant course of life, so much checked and controlled by the strict and severe precepts of Christ, and that Christianity so plainly and positively asserted a Divine Providence, that governs the world, and that will adjudge to men suitable rewards and punishments in another world. The Stoics, on the other hand, though pretending to principles of great and uncommon rigour and severity, and such as had nearest affinity to the doctrines of the Christian religion, yet found themselves aggrieved with it: that meek and humble temper of mind, that modesty and self-

^p Acts xvii. 15.

^q C. Nep. in vit. Attic. c. 3.

^r Orat. pro Flac.

^s Vid. Lysipp. Comic. apud Dicæarch. de vit. Græc. a Steph. edit. c. 3. p. 18.

denial, which the gospel so earnestly recommends to us, and so strictly requires of us, being so directly contrary to the immoderate pride and ambition of that sect, who, beyond all proportions of reason, were not ashamed to make their wise man equal to, and in some things to exceed, God himself.¹

VII. While St. Paul stayed at Athens, in expectation of Silas and Timothy to come to him, he went up and down to take a more curious view and survey of the city; which he found miserably overgrown with superstition and idolatry: as indeed Athens was noted by all their own writers for far greater numbers of deities and idols than all Greece besides.² They were ὥσπερ περὶ τὰ ἄλλα φιλοξενούντες, οὕτω καὶ περὶ τοὺς θεούς· πολλὰ γὰρ τῶν ξενικῶν ἱερῶν παρεδέξαντο, as Strabo notes;³ not more fond of strangers and novelties in other things, than forward to comply with novelties in religion, ready to entertain any foreign deities and rites of worship; no divinity that was elsewhere adored, coming amiss to them. Whence Athens is by one of their own orators styled,⁴ τὸ μέγιστον τῆς εὐσεβείας κεφάλαιον, “the great sum and centre of piety and religion:” and he there aggravates the impiety of Epicurus, in speaking unworthily and irreverently of the gods, from the place where he did it; at Athens, a place so pious, so devoted to them. Indeed herein justly commendable, that they could not brook the least dishonourable reflection upon any deity, and therefore Apollonius Tyanæus tells Timasion,⁵ that the safest way was to speak well of all the gods, and especially at Athens, where altars were dedicated even to unknown gods. And so St. Paul here found it; for among the several shrines and places of worship and devotion, he took more particular notice of one altar inscribed “To the Unknown God.” The entire inscription, whereof the apostle

¹ Tantum sapienti sua, quantum Deo omnis ætas patet. Est aliquid, quo sapiens antecedit Deum: ille naturæ beneficio non timet, suo sapiens. Ecce res magna, habere imbecillitatem hominis, securitatem Dei.—Senec. Epist. liii. Solebat Sextius dicere, Jovem plus non posse, quam bonum virum. Plura Jupiter habet, quæ præstet hominibus: sed inter duos bonos non est melior, qui locupletior. Jupiter quo antecedit virum bonum? diutius bonus est. Sapiens nihilo se minoris æstimat, quod virtutes ejus spatio breviori clauduntur.—Id. Epist. lxxiii.

² Pausan. l. i. p. 42. Hesych. in voc. Θεοί. Nonn. Dionys. l. xxxviii. p. 542. .

³ Geograph. l. x. p. 325.

⁴ Himer. Orat. in Epicur. ap. Phot. Cod. CCXLIII. col. 1086.

⁵ Philostr. de vit. Apollon. l. vi. c. 2. et ex eo. Suid. in voc. Τιμασίων.

quotes only part of the last words, is thought to have been this: **ΘΕΟΙΣ ΑΣΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΥΡΩΠΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΛΙΒΥΗΣ ΘΕΩ ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΚΑΙ ΞΕΝΩ**:^a "To the gods of Asia, Europe, and Africa, to the strange and unknown god." St. Jerome represents it in the same manner,^b only makes it gods, in the plural number, which because, says he, St. Paul needed not, he only cited it in the singular: which surely he affirms without any just ground and warrant; though it cannot be denied, but that heathen writers make frequent mention of the altars of unknown gods, that were at Athens, as there want not others who speak of some erected there to an unknown god. This notion the Athenians might probably borrow from the Hebrews, who had the name of God in great secrecy and veneration. This being one of the titles given him by the prophet,^c **אל מסתתר** "a hidden God," or "a God that hides himself." Sure I am that Justin Martyr tells us,^d that one of the principal names given to God by some of the heathens, was *Πάγκρυφος*, "one altogether hidden." Hence the Egyptians probably derived their great God Ammon,^e or more truly Amun, which signifies *occult*, or *hidden*. Accordingly, in this passage of St. Paul, the Syriac interpreter renders it, "the altar of the hidden God." The Jews were infinitely superstitious in concealing the name of God,^f not thinking it lawful ordinarily to pronounce it. This made the Gentiles, strangers at best both to the language and religion of the Jews, at a great loss by what name to call him, only styling him in general an uncertain, unspeakable, invisible deity: whence Caligula,^f in his ranting oration to the Jews, told them, that wretches as they were, though they refused to own him, whom all others had confessed to be a deity, yet they could worship *τὸν ἀκατανόμαστον ὕμῃν*, "their own nameless God." And hence the Gentiles derived their custom of keeping secret the name of their gods: thus Plutarch tells us^h of the tutelar deity of Rome,

^a Oecumen. Schol. in Act. xvii. p. 137.

^b Com. in Tit. cap. i. ad Paul. et Eustoch.

^c Isai. xlv. 15.

^d Paræn. ad Græc. p. 37.

^e Plutarch. lib. de Isid. et Osir. p. 354.

^f *Dedita sacris Incerti Jndæa Dei.* Lucan. Pharsal. lib. ii. *incertum Mosis numen.* Tribel. Poll. in vit. Claud. c. 2. *Judæi mente sola, unumque numen intelligunt; summum illud et æternum, neque mutabile, neque interitum.* Tacit. Histor. l. v. c. 5.

^g Phil. de legat. ad Cai. p. 1041.

^h Quæst. Rom. p. 279. vid. Serv. ad illud Virgil. Georgic. l. i. *Dii patrii indigites, etc.*

that it was not lawful to name it, or so much as to inquire what sex it was of, whether god or goddess; and that for once revealing it, Valerius Soranus, though tribune of the people, came to an untimely end, and was crucified, the vilest and most dishonourable kind of death: whereof, among other reasons, he assigns this, that by concealing the author of their public safety, *μὴ μόνον τοῦτον, ἀλλὰ πάντας ἀπὸ τῶν πολιτῶν τοὺς θεοὺς τιμᾶσθαι*, “not he only, but all the other gods might have due honour and worship paid to them.” Hence in their public adorations, after the invocation of particular deities, they were wont to add some more general and comprehensive form; as when Cicero had been making his address to most of their particular gods, he concludes with a *Cæteros item Deos, Deasque omnes imploro atque obtestor*.¹ Usually the form was *DII DEÆQUE OMNES*. The reason whereof was this, that not being assured many times what that peculiar deity was, that was proper to their purpose, or what numbers of gods there were in the world, they would not affront or offend any, by seeming to neglect and pass them by. And this Chrysostom^j thinks to have been particularly designed in the erection of this Athenian altar, *μήποτε καὶ ἄλλός τις ἢ αὐτοῖς μὲν οὐδέπω γνώριμος, θεραπευόμενος δὲ ἀλλαχοῦ*, “they were afraid lest there might be some other deity (besides those whom they particularly worshipped) as yet unknown to them, though honoured and adored elsewhere;” and therefore, *ὑπὲρ πλείονος ἀσφαλείας*, “for the more security,” they dedicated an altar to the unknown god. As for the particular occasion of erecting these altars at Athens, (omitting that of Pan’s appearing to Philippiades, mentioned by Oecumenius,) the most probable seems to be this. When a great plague raged at Athens,^k and several means had been attempted for the removal of it, they were advised by Epimenides, the philosopher, to build an altar, and dedicate it *τῷ προσήκοντι θεῷ*, “to the proper and peculiar deity to whom it did appertain,” be he what he would. A course which proving successful, no doubt gave occasion to them, by way of gratitude, to erect more shrines to this unknown

¹ In Verr. Accus. 7. Post specialem invocationem, transit ad generalitatem, ne quod numen prætereat, more Pontificum per quos ritu veteri in omnibus sacris, post speciales Deos, quos ad ipsum sacrum, quod fiebat, necesse erat invocari, generaliter omnia numina invocabantur. Serv. in illud Virgil Georgic. lib. i. *Dique Deæque omnes*.

^j Homil xxxviii. in Act.

^k Laert. l. i. in vit. Epimen. p. 78.

god. And accordingly Laertius, who lived long after St. Paul's time, tells us that there were such nameless altars (he means such as were not inscribed to any particular deity) in and about Athens in his days, as monuments of that eminent deliverance.

VII. But whatever the particular cause might be, hence it was that St. Paul took occasion to discourse of the true, but to them unknown God. For the philosophers had before treated him with a great deal of scorn and derision, asking what that idle and prating fellow had to say to them? Others looking upon him as a propagator of new and strange gods, because he preached to them Jesus and Anastasis, or the resurrection, which they looked upon as two upstart deities, lately come into the world. Hereupon they brought him to the place where stood the famous senate-house of the Areopagites, and according to the Athenian humour, which altogether delighted in curious novelties, running up and down the *forum*, and places of public concourse, to see any strange accident, or hear any new report, (a vice which their own great orator long since taxed them with,¹) they asked him, what that new and strange doctrine was, which he preached to them? Whereupon, in a neat and elegant discourse, he began to tell them, he had observed how much they were overrun with superstition, that their zeal for religion was indeed generous and commendable, but which miserably overshot its due measures and proportions; that he had taken notice of an altar among them, inscribed, "To the unknown God," and therefore, in compassion to their blind and misguided zeal, he would declare unto them the deity which they ignorantly worshipped; and that this was no other than the great God, the Creator of all things, the Supreme Governor and Ruler of the world, who was incapable of being confined within any temple or human fabric: that no image could be made as a proper instrument to represent him; that he needed no gifts or sacrifices, being himself the fountain from whence life, breath, and all other blessings were derived to particular beings; that from one common original he had made the whole race of mankind, and had wisely fixed and determined the times and bounds of their habitation; and all to this end, that men might be the stronglier obliged to seek after him, and sincerely to serve

¹ Τοσούτον χρόνον σπουδάζετε, ὅσον ἂν καθήσθε, ἀκούοντες ἣν προσαγγελθῇ τι νεώτερον. Demosth. Philip. iv.

and worship him: a duty which they might easily attain to, (though otherwise sunk into the deepest degeneracy, and overspread with the grossest darkness,) he every where affording such palpable evidences of his own being and providence, that he seemed to stand near, and touch us; it being entirely from him that we derive our life, motion, and subsistence. A thing acknowledged even by their own poet,^m that "we also are his offspring." If therefore God was our Creator, it was highly unreasonable to think that we could make any image or representation of him: that it was too long already that the divine patience had borne with the manners of men, and suffered them to go on in their blind idolatries; that now he expected a general repentance and reformation from the world, especially having by the publishing of his gospel put out of all dispute the case of a future judgment, and particularly appointed the holy Jesus to be the person that should sentence and judge the world: by whose resurrection he had given sufficient evidence and assurance of it. No sooner had he mentioned the resurrection, but some of the philosophers (no doubt Epicureans, who were wont to laugh at the notion of a future state) mocked and derided him; others more gravely answered, that they would hear him again concerning this matter. But his discourse, however scorned and slighted, did not wholly want its desired effect, and that upon some of the greatest quality and rank among them. In the number of whom was Dionysius, one of the grave senators and judges of the Areopagus, and Damaris, whom the ancients, not improbably, make his wife.ⁿ

VIII. This Dionysius was bred at Athens, in all the learned arts and sciences: at five and twenty years of age, he is said to have travelled into Egypt, to perfect himself in the study of astrology, for which that nation had the credit and renown.^o Here beholding the miraculous eclipse that was at the time of our Saviour's passion, he concluded that some great accident must needs be coming upon the world. Returning to Athens, he became one of the senators of the Areopagus, disputed with St. Paul, and was by him converted from his errors and idolatry; and being thoroughly instructed, was by him (as the ancients

^m Arat. Phæ. in prin. et vid. Schol. ibid.

ⁿ Chrysost. de Sacerdot. l. iv. c. 7.

^o Vid. inter alios Suid. in voc. Διονύσιος.

inform us^p) made the first bishop of Athens. As for those that tell us,^q that he went afterwards into France by the direction of Clemens of Rome, planted Christianity at and became bishop of Paris, of his suffering martyrdom there under Domitian, his carrying his head for the space of two miles in his hand after it had been cut off, and the rest of his miracles done before and after his death, I have as little leisure to inquire into them, as I have faith to believe them. Indeed, the foundation of all is justly denied, viz. that ever he was there: a thing never heard of till the times of Charles the Great, though since that, volumes have been written of this controversy, both heretofore and of later times, among which J. Sirmondus the Jesuit, and Monsieur Launoy, one of the learned doctors of the Sorbonne, have unanswerably proved the Athenian and Parisian Dionysius to be distinct persons. For the books that go under his name, M. Daillé has sufficiently evinced them to be of a date many hundred years younger than St. Denys, though I doubt not but they may claim a greater antiquity than what he allows them. But whoever was their author, I am sure Suidas^r has over-stretched the praise of them beyond all proportion, when he gives them this character: *εἴ τις ἀπίδοι πρὸς τὰ κάλλη τῶν αὐτῶν λόγων, καὶ τὰ βάθη τῶν νοημάτων, οὐκ ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ταῦτα νομίσαι γενήματα, ἀλλὰ τινος ἀκηράτου καὶ θείας δυνάμεως*: “that whoever considers the elegancy of his discourses, and the profoundness of his notions and speculations, must needs conclude that they are not the issue of any human understanding, but of some divine and immaterial power.” But to return to our apostle.

SECTION IV.

OF ST. PAUL'S ACTS AT CORINTH AND EPHEBUS.

St. Paul's arrival at Corinth. The opposition made by the Jews. The success of his preaching upon others. His first epistle to the Thessalonians, when written. His arraignment before Gallio. The second epistle to the Thessalonians, and the design

^p Dionys. Corinth. Episc. ap. Euseb. l. iii. c. 4. et l. iv. c. 22.

^q Martyrium S. Dionys. per S. Metaphr. ap. Sur. ad diem 9 Octob. Epist. Hilduin. Abb. et Hincm. Rhem. item Passio ejus, aliaque ibid. Niceph. l. ii. c. 20.

^r In voc. *Διονύσιος*.

of it. St. Paul's voyage to Jerusalem. His coming to Ephesus. Disciples baptized into John's baptism. St. Paul's preaching at Ephesus, and the miracles wrought by him. Ephesus noted for the study of magic. Jews eminently versed in charms and enchantments. The original of the mystery, whence pretended to have been derived. The ill attempt of the sons of Sceva to dispossess demons in the name of Christ. St. Paul's doctrine greatly successful upon this sort of men. Books of magic forbidden by the Roman laws. St. Paul's epistle to the Galatians, why and when written. Diana's temple at Ephesus, and its great stateliness and magnificence. The mutiny against St. Paul raised by Demetrius and his party. St. Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, upon what occasion written. His epistle to Titus. Apollonius Tyanaeus, whether at Ephesus at the same time with St. Paul. His miracles pretended to be done in that city.

AFTER his departure from Athens, he went to Corinth,^s the metropolis of Greece, and the residence of the proconsul of Achaia; where he found Aquila and Priscilla lately come from Italy, banished out of Rome by the decree of Claudius. And they being of the same trade and profession, wherein he had been educated in his youth, he wrought together with them, lest he should be unnecessarily burdensome unto any, which for the same reason he did in some other places. Hither, after some time, Silas and Timothy came to him. In the synagogue he frequently disputed with the Jews and proselytes, reasoning and proving that Jesus was the true Messiah. They, according to the nature of the men, made head and opposed him; and what they could not conquer by argument and force of reason, they endeavoured to carry by noise and clamour, mixed with blasphemies and revilings, the last refuges of an impotent and baffled cause: whereat to testify his resentment, he shook his garments, and told them, since he saw them resolved to pull down vengeance and destruction upon their own heads, he for his part was guiltless and innocent, and would henceforth address himself unto the Gentiles. Accordingly he left them, and went into the house of Justus, a religious proselyte, where, by his preaching and the many miracles which he wrought, he converted great numbers to the faith: amongst which were Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, Gaius, and Stephanus, who, together with their families, embraced the doctrine of the gospel, and were baptized into the Christian faith. But the constant returns of malice and ingratitude are enough to tire the largest charity, and cool the most generous resolution: therefore, that the apostle might not be discouraged by the restless attempts and

^s Acts xviii. 1,

machinations of his enemies, our Lord appeared to him in a vision ; told him, that notwithstanding the bad success he had hitherto met with, there was a great harvest to be gathered in that place ; that he should not be afraid of his enemies, but go on to preach confidently and securely, for that he himself would stand by him and preserve him.

II. About this time, as is most probable, he wrote this first epistle to the Thessalonians, Silas and Timothy being lately returned from thence, and having done the message for which he had sent them thither. The main design of the epistle is to confirm them in the belief of the Christian religion, and that they would persevere in it, notwithstanding all the afflictions and persecutions which he had told them would ensue upon their profession of the gospel, and to instruct them in the main duties of a Christian and religious life. While the apostle was thus employed, the malice of the Jews was no less at work against him ; and universally combining together, they brought him before Gallio, the proconsul of the province, elder brother to the famous Seneca : before him they accused the apostle as an innovator in religion, that sought to introduce a new way of worship, contrary to what was established by the Jewish law, and permitted by the Roman powers. The apostle was ready to have pleaded his own cause ; but the proconsul told them, that had it been a matter of right or wrong, that had fallen under the cognizance of the civil judicature, it had been very fit and reasonable that he should have heard and determined the case ; but since the controversy was only concerning the punctilios and niceties of their religion, it was very improper for him to be a judge in such matters. And when they still clamoured about it, he threw out their indictment, and commanded his officers to drive them out of court : whereupon some of the townsmen seized upon Sosthenes, one of the rulers of the Jewish consistory, a man active and busy in this insurrection, and beat him even before the court of judicature, the proconsul not at all concerning himself about it. A year and an half St. Paul continued in this place, and, before his departure thence, wrote his second epistle to the Thessalonians, to supply the want of his coming to them, which in his former he had resolved on, and for which, in a manner, he had engaged his promise. In this, therefore, he endeavours again to confirm their minds in the truth of the gospel,

and that they would not be shaken with those troubles which the wicked unbelieving Jews would not cease to create them ; a lost and undone race of men, and whom the divine vengeance was ready finally to overtake. And because some passages in his former letter relating to this destruction had been misunderstood, as if this day of the Lord were just then at hand, he rectifies those mistakes, and shews what must precede our Lord's coming unto judgment.

III. St. Paul having thus fully planted and cultivated the church at Corinth, resolved now for Syria ;^t and taking along with him Aquila and Priscilla, at Cenchrea, the port and harbour of Corinth, Aquila (for of him it is certainly to be understood) shaved his head, in performance of a Nazarite vow he had formerly made, the time whereof was now run out. In his passage into Syria he came to Ephesus, where he preached a while in the synagogue of the Jews ; and though desired to stay with them, yet having resolved to be at Jerusalem at the passover, (probably that he might have the fitter opportunity to meet his friends, and preach the gospel to those vast numbers that usually flocked to that great solemnity,) he promised, that in his return he would come again to them. Sailing thence, he landed at Cæsarea, and thence went up to Jerusalem, where having visited the church, and kept the feast, he went down to Antioch. Here having stayed some time, he traversed the countries of Galatia and Phrygia, confirming, as he went, the new-converted Christians, and so came to Ephesus ; where finding certain Christian disciples,^u he inquired of them, whether, since their conversion, they had received the miraculous gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost ? They told him, that the doctrine which they had received had nothing in it of that nature, nor had they ever heard that any such extraordinary spirit had of late been bestowed upon the church. Hereupon he farther inquired, unto what they had been baptized ? (the Christian baptism being administered in the name of the Holy Ghost.) They answered, they had received no more than John's baptism ; which though it obliged men to repentance, yet did it explicitly speak nothing of the Holy Ghost, or its gifts and powers. To this the apostle replied, that though John's baptism did openly oblige to nothing but repentance, yet that it did implicitly acknowledge the whole

^t Acts xviii. 18.

^u Acts xix. 1.

doctrine concerning Christ and the Holy Ghost : whereto they assenting, were solemnly initiated by Christian baptism, and the apostle laying his hands upon them, they immediately received the Holy Ghost, in the gift of tongues, prophecy, and other miraculous powers conferred upon them.

IV. After this he entered into the Jewish synagogues, where for the first three months he contended and disputed with the Jews ; endeavouring, with great earnestness and resolution, to convince them of the truth of those things that concerned the Christian religion. But when, instead of success, he met with nothing but refractoriness and infidelity, he left the synagogue, and taking those with him whom he had converted, instructed them, and others that resorted to him, in the school of one Tyrannus, a place where scholars were wont to be educated and instructed. In this manner he continued for two years together : in which time the Jews and proselytes of the whole proconsular Asia had opportunity of having the gospel preached to them. And because miracles are the clearest evidence of a divine commission, and the most immediate credentials of heaven, those which do nearest affect our senses, and consequently have the strongest influence upon our minds, therefore God was pleased to ratify the doctrine which St. Paul delivered by great and miraculous operations ; and those of somewhat a more peculiar and extraordinary nature : insomuch that he did not only heal those that came to him, but if napkins or handkerchiefs were but touched by him, and applied unto the sick, their diseases immediately vanished, and the demons and evil spirits departed out of those that were possessed by them.

V. Ephesus, above all other places in the world, was noted of old for the study of magic, and all secret and hidden arts ; whence the *Ἐφέσια γράμματα*, so often spoken of by the ancients,* which were certain obscure and mystical spells and charms, by which they endeavoured to heal diseases and drive away evil spirits, and do things beyond the reach and apprehensions of common people. Besides other professors of this black art, there were at this time at Ephesus certain Jews, who dealt in the arts of exorcism and incantation ; a craft and mystery which Josephus† affirms to have been derived from So-

* Suid. in voc. *Ἐφέσ. γράμμ.* et Clem. Alex. Strom. l. i. s. 15.

† Antiq. Jud. l. viii. c. 2.

lomon; who, he tells us, did not only find it out, but composed forms of exorcism and enchantment, whereby to cure diseases and expel demons, so as they should never return again; and adds, *καὶ αὕτη μέχρι νῦν παρ' ἡμῖν ἡ θεραπεία πλείστον ἰσχύει*, "that this art was still in force among the Jews:" instances whereof, he tells us, he himself had seen, having beheld one Eleazar, a Jew, in the presence of Vespasian, his sons, and the great officers of his army, curing demoniacs, by holding a ring to their nose, under whose seal was hid the root of a certain plant, prescribed by Solomon, at the scent whereof the demon presently took leave and was gone, the patient falling to the ground, while the exorcist, by mentioning Solomon, and reciting some charms made by him, stood over him, and charged the evil spirit never to return. And to let them see that he was really gone, he commanded the demon, as he went out, to overturn a cup full of water, which he had caused to be set in the room before them. In the number of these conjurors now at Ephesus, there were the seven sons of Sceva, one of the chief heads of the families of the priests, who, seeing what great things were done by calling over demoniacs the name of Christ, attempted themselves to do the like, conjuring the evil spirit in the name of that Jesus, whom Paul preached, to depart. But the stubborn demon would not obey the warrant, telling them, he knew who Jesus and Paul were, but did not understand what authority they had to use his name. And not content with this, forced the demoniac violently to fall upon them, to tear their clothes, and wound their bodies, scarce suffering them to escape with the safety of their lives: an accident that begot great terror in the minds of men, and became the occasion of converting many to the faith; who came to the apostle, and confessed the former course and manner of their lives. Several also, who had traded in curious arts, and the mysterious methods of spells and charms, freely brought their books of magic rites, (whose price, had they been to be sold, according to the rates which men who dealt in those cursed mysteries put upon them, would have amounted to the value of above one thousand five hundred pounds,)* and openly burnt them before the

* Acts xix. 19. Συνέφηψαν τὰς τιμὰς αὐτῶν, καὶ εἶρον ἀργυρίου μυριάδας πέντε· Ἀργύριον Græcorum valuit drachmam Atticam, adeoque nostri 7d. ob. Ac proinde Ἀργυρίου myriades quinque nummi nostri summam conficiunt 1562*l.* 10*s.*

people, themselves adjudging them to those flames to which they were condemned by the laws of the empire. For so we find the Roman laws prohibiting any to keep books of magic arts,* and that where any such were found, their goods should be forfeited, the books publicly burned, the persons banished, and, if of a meaner rank, beheaded. These books the penitent converts did of their own accord sacrifice to the fire, not tempted to spare them either by their former love to them, or the present price and value of them. With so mighty an efficacy did the gospel prevail over the minds of men.

VI. About this time it was that the apostle writ his epistle to the Galatians. For he had heard that, since his departure, corrupt opinions had got in amongst them about the necessary observation of the legal rites, and that several impostors were crept into that church, who knew no better way to undermine the doctrine he had planted there, than by vilifying his person, slighting him as an apostle only at the second hand, not to be compared with Peter, James, and John, who had familiarly conversed with Christ in the days of his flesh, and been immediately deputed by him. In this epistle therefore he reproves them with some necessary smartness and severity, that they had been so soon led out of that right way wherein he had set them, and had so easily suffered themselves to be imposed upon by the crafty artifices of seducers. He vindicates the honour of his apostolate, and the immediate receiving his commission from Christ, wherein he shews, that he came not behind the very best of those apostles. He largely refutes those Judaical opinions that had tainted and infected them, and in the conclusion instructs them in the rules and duties of an holy life. While the apostle thus stayed at Ephesus, he resolved with himself to pass through Macedonia and Achaia, thence to Jerusalem, and so to Rome: but for the present altered his resolution, and continued still at Ephesus.

VII. During his stay in this place, an accident happened, that involved him in great trouble and danger. Ephesus, above all the cities of the East, was renowned for the famous temple of Diana, one of the stateliest temples of the world. It was (as

* Paul. JC. Sentent. l. v. sent. 21. sect. 4. tit. xxiii. ad leg. Cornel. de Sicar. et Venefic. Vid. leg. 4. ff. famil. hercisc. sect. 1. l. x. tit. ii. et Cod. Theod. de Malef. et Mathem. l. ix. tit. xvi. l. 12.

Pliny tells us^b) the very wonder of magnificence, built at the common charges of all Asia properly so called, two hundred and twenty years (elsewhere he says four hundred^c) in building, which we are to understand of its successive rebuildings and reparations, being often wasted and destroyed. It was four hundred and twenty-five feet long, two hundred and twenty broad, supported by one hundred and twenty-seven pillars, sixty feet high: for its antiquity, it was in some degree before the times of Bacchus, equal to the reign of the Amazons,^d (by whom it is generally said to have been first built,) as the Ephesian ambassadors told Tiberius,^e till by degrees it grew up into that greatness and splendour, that it was generally reckoned one of the seven wonders of the world. But that which gave the greatest fame and reputation to it, was an image of Diana kept there, made of no very costly materials, but which the crafty priests persuaded the people was beyond all human artifice or contrivement, and that it was immediately formed by Jupiter, and “dropped down from heaven,” having first killed, or banished the artists that made it, (as Suidas informs us,^f) that the cheat might not be discovered; by which means, they drew not Ephesus only, but the whole world into a mighty veneration of it. Besides, there were within this temple multitudes of silver cabinets, or chapelets, little shrines, made in fashion of the temple, wherein was placed the image of Diana. For the making of these holy shrines, great numbers of silversmiths were employed and maintained, among whom one Demetrius was a leading man, who, foreseeing that, if the Christian religion still got ground, their gainful trade would soon come to nothing, presently called together the men of his profession, especially those whom he himself set on work; told them, that now their welfare and livelihood were concerned, and that the fortunes of their wives and children lay at stake; that it was plain that this Paul had perverted city and country, and persuaded the people that the images which they made and worshipped were no real gods; by which means their trade was not only like to fall to the ground, but also the honour and magnificence of the great goddess Diana, whom not Asia only, but the whole world did worship and adore.

^b Hist. Nat. l. xxxvi. c. 14.

^c Lib. xvi. c. 40.

^d Vid. Callym. in Dian. Hymn. ii. et Dionys. Perieg. v. 289.

^e Tacit. Annal. l. iii. c. 61.

^f Suid. in voc. *Διονερέας*.

Enraged with this discourse, they cried out with one voice, that "Great was Diana of the Ephesians." The whole city was presently in an uproar, and seizing upon two of St. Paul's companions, hurried them into the theatre, probably with a design to have cast them to the wild beasts. St. Paul hearing of their danger, would have ventured himself among them, had not the Christians, nay, some even of the Gentile priests, governors of the popular games and sports, earnestly dissuaded him from it; well knowing that the people were resolved, if they could meet with him, to throw him to the wild beasts, that were kept there for the disport and pleasure of the people. And this doubtless he means, when elsewhere he tells us, that "he fought with beasts at Ephesus," probably intending what the people designed, though he did not actually suffer; though the brutish rage, the savage and inhuman manners of this people did sufficiently deserve that the censure and character should be fixed upon themselves.

VIII. Great was the confusion of the multitude, the major part not knowing the reason of the concourse. In which distraction, Alexander, a Jewish convert, being thrust forward by the Jews to be questioned and examined about this matter, he would accordingly have made his apology to the people, intending no doubt to clear himself by casting the whole blame upon St. Paul: this being very probably that Alexander the copper-smith, of whom our apostle elsewhere complains,^s "that he did him much evil, and greatly withstood his words," and "whom he delivered over unto Satan" for his apostacy, for blaspheming Christ, and reproaching Christianity. But the multitude perceiving him to be a Jew, and thereby suspecting him to be one of St. Paul's associates, began to raise an outcry for near two hours together, wherein nothing could be heard, but "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The noise being a little over, the recorder, a discreet and prudent man, came out, and calmly told them, that it was sufficiently known to all the world, what a mighty honour and veneration the city of Ephesus had for the great goddess Diana, and the famous image which fell from heaven, that therefore there needed not this stir to vindicate and assert it: that they had seized persons who were not guilty either of sacrilege or blasphemy towards their goddess; that if Demetrius and his

^s 2 Tim. iv. 14, 15. 1 Tim. i. 20.

company had any just charge against them, the courts were sitting, and they might prefer their indictment; or if the controversy were about any other matter, it might be referred to such a proper judicature as the law appoints for the determination of such cases: that therefore they should do well to be quiet, having done more already than they could answer, if called in question, (as it is like they would,) there being no cause sufficient to justify that day's riotous assembly: with which prudent discourse he appeased and dismissed the multitude.

IX. It was about this time that St. Paul heard of some disturbance in the church at Corinth, hatched and fomented by a pack of false heretical teachers, crept in among them, who endeavoured to draw them into parties and factions, by persuading one party to be for Peter, another for Paul, a third for Apollos; as if the main of religion consisted in being of this or that denomination, or in a warm active zeal to decry and oppose whoever is not of our narrow sect. It is a very weak and slender claim, when a man holds his religion by no better a title than that he has joined himself to this man's church, or that man's congregation, and is zealously earnest to maintain and promote it; to be childish and passionately clamorous for one man's mode and way of administration, or for some particular humour or opinion, as if religion lay in nice and curious disputes, or in separating from our brethren, and not rather "in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." By this means schisms and factions broke into the Corinthian church, whereby many wild and extravagant opinions, and some of them such as undermined the fundamental articles of Christianity, were planted, and had taken root there: as the envious man never fishes more successfully than in troubled waters. To cure these distempers, St. Paul (who had received an account of all these by letters, which Apollos and some others had brought to him from the church of Corinth) writes his first epistle to them: wherein he smartly reproves them for their schisms and parties, conjures them to peace and unity, corrects those gross corruptions that were introduced among them, and particularly resolves those many cases and controversies wherein they had requested his advice and counsel. Shortly after Apollos designing to go for Crete, by him and Zenas St. Paul sends his epistle to Titus, whom he had made bishop of that island, and had left there for

the propagating of the gospel. Herein he fully instructs him in the execution of his office, how to carry himself, and what directions he should give to others, to all particular ranks and relations of men, especially those who were to be advanced to places of office and authority in the church.

X. A little before St. Paul's departure from Ephesus, we may not improbably suppose that Apollonius Tyanæus, the famous philosopher and magician of the heathen world, (a man remarkable for the strictness of his manners, and his sober and regular course of life, but especially for the great miracles said to have been done by him; whom therefore the heathens generally set up as the great corival of our Saviour, though some of his own party, and particularly Euphratus the philosopher,^h who lived with him at the same time at Rome, accused him for doing his strange feats by magic,) came to Ephesus. The enemy of mankind probably designing to obstruct the propagation of Christianity, by setting up one who by the arts of magic might, at least in the vogue and estimation of the people, equal or eclipse the miracles of St. Paul. Certain it is, if we compare times and actions set down by the writer of his Life,ⁱ we shall find that he came hither about the beginning of Nero's reign; and he particularly sets down the strange things that were done by him, especially his clearing the city of a grievous plague, for which the people of Ephesus had him in such veneration, that they erected a statue to him as to a particular deity, and did divine honour to it.^k But whether this was before St. Paul's going thence, I will not take upon me to determine; it seems most probable to have been done afterwards.

SECTION V.

ST. PAULS ACTS, FROM HIS DEPARTURE FROM EPHEBUS TILL HIS ARRAIGNMENT BEFORE FELIX.

St. Paul's journey into Macedonia. His preaching as far as Illyricum, and return into Greece. His second epistle to the Corinthians, and what the design of it. His first

^h Euseb. l. iv. contra Hierocl. p. 530. ad calc. Demonstr. Evang.

ⁱ Philostr. de vit. Apoll. Tyan. l. iv. c. 1. et c. 12. confer. l. v.

^k Ibid. l. iv. c. 3. Vid. Euseb. in Hierocl. l. iv. apud Philostr. p. 457.

epistle to Timothy. His epistle to the Romans, whence written, and with what design. St. Paul's preaching at Troas, and raising Eutychus. His summoning the Asian bishops to Miletus, and pathetic discourse to them. His stay at Cæsarea with Philip the Deacon. The church's passionate dissuading him from going to Jerusalem. His coming to Jerusalem, and compliance with the indifferent rites of the Mosaic law, and why. The tumults raised against him by the Jews, and his rescue by the Roman captain. His asserting his Roman freedom. His carriage before the Sanhedrim. The difference between the Pharisees and Sadducees about him. The Jews' conspiracy against his life discovered His being sent unto Cæsarea.

It was not long after the tumult at Ephesus, when St. Paul, having called the church together, and constituted Timothy bishop of that place, took his leave, and departed by Troas for Macedonia.¹ And at this time it was that, as he himself tells us, he "preached the gospel round about unto Illyricum," since called Sclavonia, some parts of Macedonia bordering on that province. From Macedonia he returned back unto Greece, where he abode three months, and met with Titus, lately come with great contributions from the church at Corinth: by whose example he stirred up the liberality of the Macedonians, who very freely, and somewhat beyond their ability, contributed to the poor Christians at Jerusalem. From Titus he had an account of the present state of the church at Corinth; and by him at his return, together with St. Luke, he sent his second epistle to them: wherein he endeavours to set right what his former epistle had not yet effected, to vindicate his apostleship from that contempt and scorn, and himself from those slanders and aspersions, which the seducers, who had found themselves lashed by his first epistle, had cast upon him, together with some other particular cases relating to them. Much about the same time he writ his first epistle to Timothy, whom he had left at Ephesus, wherein at large he counsels him how to carry himself in the discharge of that great place and authority in the church, which he had committed to him; instructs him in the particular qualifications of those whom he should make choice of, to be bishops and ministers in the church. How to order the deaconesses, and to instruct servants; warning him withal of that pestilent generation of heretics and seducers that would arise in the church. During his three months stay in Greece, he went to Corinth, whence he wrote his famous epistle to the Romans, which he sent by Phœbe, a deaconess of the church of Cenchrea,

¹ Acts xx. 1.

nigh Corinth : wherein his main design is fully to state and determine the great controversy between the Jews and Gentiles, about the obligation of the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law, and those main and material doctrines of Christianity which did depend upon it, such as of Christian liberty, the use of indifferent things, &c. : and, which is the main end of all religion, instructs them in, and presses them to the duties of an holy and good life, such as the Christian doctrine does naturally tend to oblige men to.

II. St. Paul being now resolved for Syria, to convey the contributions to the brethren at Jerusalem, was a while diverted from that resolution, by a design he was told of which the Jews had to kill and rob him by the way. Whereupon he went back into Macedonia, and so came to Philippi, and thence went to Troas ; where having stayed a week, on the Lord's day the church met together to receive the holy sacrament. Here St. Paul preached to them, and continued his discourse till midnight, the longer probably, being the next day to depart from them. The length of his discourse, and the time of the night, had caused some of his auditors to be overtaken with sleep and drowsiness ; among whom a young man called Eutychus being fast asleep, fell down from the third story and was taken up dead, but whom St. Paul presently restored to life and health. How indefatigable was the industry of our apostle ! how close did he tread in his Master's steps, who went about doing good ! He compassed sea and land, preached and wrought miracles wherever he came. In every place, like a wise master-builder, he either laid a foundation, or raised a superstructure. He was instant in season and out of season, and spared not his pains either night or day, that he might do good to the souls of men. The night being thus spent in holy exercises, St. Paul in the morning took his leave, and went on foot to Assos, a sea-port town, whither he had sent his company by sea. Thence they set sail to Mitylene ; from thence to Samos ; and having stayed some little time at Trogyllium, the next day came to Miletus, not so much as putting in at Ephesus, because the apostle was resolved, if possible, to be at Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost.

III. At Miletus he sent to Ephesus,^m to summon the bishops and governors of the church ; who being come, he put them in

^m Acts xx. 17.

mind with what uprightness and integrity, with what affection and humility, with how great trouble and danger, with how much faithfulness to their souls he had been conversant among them, and had preached the gospel to them, ever since his first coming into those parts: that he had not failed to acquaint them both publicly and privately with whatever might be useful and profitable to them, urging both upon Jews and Gentiles repentance and reformation of life, and an hearty entertainment of the faith of Christ: that now he was resolved to go to Jerusalem, where he did not know what particular sufferings would befall him, more than this, that it had been foretold him in every place, by those who were endued with the prophetic gifts of the Holy Ghost, that afflictions and imprisonment would attend him there: but that he was not troubled at this, no, nor unwilling to lay down his life, so he might but successfully preach the gospel, and faithfully serve his Lord in that place and station wherein he had set him: that he knew that henceforth they should see his face no more; but that this was his encouragement and satisfaction, that they themselves could bear him witness, that he had not, by concealing from them any parts of the Christian doctrine, betrayed their souls: that as for themselves, whom God had made bishops and pastors of his church, they should be careful to feed, guide, and direct those Christians under their inspection, and be infinitely tender of the good of souls, for whose redemption Christ laid down his own life: that all the care they could use was no more than necessary, it being certain, that after his departure, heretical teachers would break in among them, and endanger the ruin of men's souls; nay, that even among themselves there would some arise, who by subtle and crafty methods, by corrupt and pernicious doctrines, would gain proselytes to their party, and thereby make rents and schisms in the church: that therefore they should watch, remembering with what tears and sorrow he had for three years together warned them of these things: that now he recommended them to the divine care and goodness, and to the rules and instructions of the gospel, which, if adhered to, would certainly dispose and perfect them for that state of happiness which God had prepared for good men in heaven. In short, that he had all along dealt faithfully and uprightly with them, they might know from hence, that in all his preaching he had no crafty or covetous designs upon any man's

estate or riches, having (as themselves could witness) industriously laboured with his own hands, and by his own work maintained both himself and his company: herein leaving them an example, what pains they ought to take to support the weak and relieve the poor, rather than to be themselves chargeable unto others; according to that incomparable saying of our Saviour, (which surely St. Paul had received from some of those that had conversed with him in the days of his flesh,) "it is more blessed to give than to receive." This *concio ad clerum*, or visitation-sermon, being ended, the apostle kneeled down, and concluded all with prayer: which done, they all melted into tears, and with the greatest expressions of sorrow attended him to the ship; though that which made the deepest impression upon their minds was, that he had told them "that they should see his face no more."

IV. Departing from Miletus they arrived at Coos;" thence came to Rhodes, thence to Patara, thence to Tyre; where meeting with some Christians, he was advised by those among them, who had the gift of prophecy, that he should not go up to Jerusalem: with them he stayed a week, and then going all together to the shore, he kneeled down and prayed with them; and having mutually embraced one another, he went on board, and came to Ptolemais, where only saluting the brethren, they came next day unto Cæsarea. Here they lodged in the house of Philip the Evangelist, one of the seven deacons that were at first set apart by the apostles, who had four virgin-daughters, all endued with the gift of prophecy. During their stay in this place, Agabus, a Christian prophet, came down hither from Judea; who taking Paul's girdle, bound with it his own hands and feet, telling them, that by this external symbol the Holy Ghost did signify and declare that St. Paul should be thus served by the Jews at Jerusalem, and be by them delivered over into the hands of the Gentiles. Whereupon they all passionately besought him that he would divert his course to some other place. The apostle asked them, what they meant, by these compassionate dissuaves to add more affliction to his sorrow? that he was willing and resolved not only to be imprisoned, but, if need were, to die at Jerusalem for the sake of Christ and his religion. Finding his resolution fixed and immoveable they importuned him no farther,

▪ Acts xxi. 1.

but left the event to the divine will and pleasure. All things being in readiness, they set forwards on their journey; and being come to Jerusalem, were kindly and joyfully entertained by the Christians there.

V. The next day after their arrival,^o St. Paul and his company went to the house of St. James the Apostle, where the rest of the bishops and governors of the church were met together: after mutual salutations, he gave them a particular account with what success God had blessed him in propagating Christianity among the Gentiles, for which they all heartily blessed God: but withal told him, that he was now come to a place where there were many thousands of Jewish converts, who all retained a mighty zeal and veneration for the law of Moses, and who had been informed of him, that he taught the Jews, whom he had converted in every place, to renounce circumcision and the ceremonies of the law: that as soon as the multitude heard of his arrival, they would come together to see how he behaved himself in this matter; and therefore, to prevent so much disturbance, it was advisable, that there being four men there at that time who were to accomplish a vow, (probably not the Nazarite vow, but some other, which they had made for deliverance from sickness, or some other eminent danger and distress; for so, Josephus tells us,^p they were wont to do in such cases, and before they came to offer the accustomed sacrifices, to abstain for some time from wine, and to shave their heads,) he would join himself to them, perform the usual rites and ceremonies with them, and provide such sacrifices for them as the law required in that case, and that in discharge of their vow they might shave their heads; whereby it would appear, that the reports which were spread concerning him were false and groundless, and that he himself did still observe the rites and orders of the Mosaical institution: that as for the Gentile converts, they required no such observances at their hands, nor expected any thing more from them in these indifferent matters, than what had been before determined by the apostolical synod in that place. St. Paul (who in such things was willing “to become all things to all men, that he might gain the more”) consented to the counsel which they gave him; and taking the persons along with him to the temple, told the priests, that the time of

^o Acts xxi. 18.

^p De Bell. Jud. l. ii. c. 15.

a vow which they had made being now run out, and having purified themselves as the nature of the case required, they were come to make their offerings according to the law.

VI. The seven days, wherein those sacrifices were to be offered, being now almost ended, some Jews that were come from Asia, (where probably they had opposed St. Paul,) now finding him in the temple, began to raise a tumult and uproar, and laying hold of him, called out to the rest of the Jews for their assistance: telling them, that this was the fellow that everywhere vented doctrines derogatory to the prerogative of the Jewish nation, destructive to the institutions of the law, and to the purity of that place, which he had profaned by bringing in uncircumcised Greeks into it; positively concluding, that because they had seen Trophimus, a Gentile convert of Ephesus, with him in the city, therefore he had brought him also into the temple. So apt is malice to make any premises, from whence it may infer its own conclusion. Hereupon the whole city was presently in an uproar; and seizing upon him, they dragged him out of the temple, the doors being presently shut against him. Nor had they failed there to put a period to all his troubles, had not Claudius Lysias, commander of the Roman garrison in the tower of Antonia, come in with some soldiers to his rescue and deliverance; and supposing him to be a more than ordinary malefactor, commanded a double chain to be put upon him, though as yet altogether ignorant, either who he, or what his crime was, and wherein he could receive little satisfaction from the clamorous multitude, who called for nothing but his death, following the cry with such crowds and numbers, that the soldiers were forced to take him into their arms, to secure him from the present rage and violence of the people. As they were going up into the castle, St. Paul asked the governor, whether he might have the liberty to speak to him? who, finding him to speak Greek, inquired of him whether he was not that Egyptian which a few years before had raised a sedition in Judea, and headed a party of four thousand debauched and profligate wretches? The apostle replied, that he was a Jew of Tarsus, a freeman of a rich and honourable city, and therefore begged of him that he might have leave to speak to the people; which the captain readily granted: and standing near the door of the castle, and making signs that they would hold their peace, he

began to address himself to them in the Hebrew language; which when they heard, they became a little more calm and quiet, while he discoursed to them to this effect.

VII. He gave them an account of himself from his birth,^a of his education in his youth, of the mighty zeal which he had for the rites and customs of their religion, and with what a passionate earnestness he persecuted and put to death all the Christians that he met with, whereof the high-priest and the Sanhedrim could be sufficient witnesses. He next gave them an entire and punctual relation of the way and manner of his conversion, and how that he had received an immediate command from God himself, to depart Jerusalem, and preach unto the Gentiles. At this word, the patience of the Jews could hold no longer, but they unanimously cried out to have him put to death, it not being fit that such a villain should live upon the earth. And the more to express their fury, they threw off their clothes, and cast dust into the air, as if they immediately designed to stone him: to avoid which, the captain of the guard commanded him to be brought within the castle, and that he should be examined by whipping, till he confessed the reason of so much rage against him. While the lictor was binding him in order to it, he asked the centurion that stood by, whether they could justify the scourging a citizen of Rome,^r and that before any sentence legally passed upon him? This the centurion presently intimated to the governor of the castle, bidding him have a care what he did, for the prisoner was a Roman. Whereat the governor himself came, and asked him whether he was a free denizen of Rome? and being told that he was, he replied, that it was a great privilege, a privilege which he himself had purchased at a considerable rate: to whom St. Paul answered, that it was his birth-right, and the privilege of the place where he was born and bred. Hereupon they gave over their design of whipping him, the commander himself being a little startled, that he had bound and chained a denizen of Rome.

^a Acts xxii. 1.

^r Cædebatur virgis in medio foro Messanæ civis Romanus, cum interea nullus gemitus, nulla vox alia istius miseri audiebatur, nisi hæc, civis Romanus sum. Hac se commemoratione civitatis omnia verbera depulsurum arbitrabatur. O nomen dulce libertatis! O jus eximium nostræ civitatis! O lex Porcia, legesque Sempronianæ!—Cicer. in Verr. l. vii. Facinus est vincire civem Romanum, scelus verberare.—Id. ib. vid. supra sect. iii. num. 4.

VIII. The next day, the governor commanded his chains to be knocked off; and that he might thoroughly satisfy himself in the matter, commanded the Sanhedrim to meet, and brought down Paul before them :^a where being set before the council, he told them, that in all passages of his life he had been careful to act according to the severest rules and conscience of his duty :^b “ Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.” Behold here the great security of a good man, and what invisible supports innocency affords under greatest danger. With how generous a confidence does virtue and honesty guard the breast of a good man ! as indeed nothing else can lay a firm basis and foundation for satisfaction and tranquillity, when any misery or calamity does overtake us. Religion and a good conscience beget peace and a heaven in the man’s bosom, beyond the power of the little accidents of this world to ruffle and discompose. Whence Seneca compares the mind of a wise and good man to the state of the upper region, which is always serene and calm.” The high-priest, Ananias, being offended at the holy and ingenuous freedom of our apostle, as if by asserting his own innocency he had reproached the justice of their tribunal, commanded those that stood next him, to strike him in the face ; whereto the apostle tartly replied, that God would smite him, hypocrite as he was, who, under a pretence of doing justice, had illegally commanded him to be punished, before the law condemned him for a malefactor. Whereupon they that stood by, asked him, how he durst thus affront so sacred and venerable a person as God’s high-priest ? He calmly returned, that “ he did not know [or own] Ananias to be an high-priest” [of God’s appointment.]^c However, being a person in authority, it was not lawful to revile him, God himself having commanded, that “ no man should speak

^a Acts xxiii. 1.

^b *Εἰς αὐτὸν συνειλοῦ, φύσιν ἔχει τὸ λογικὸν ἡγεμονικόν, εἰαυτῷ ἀρκεῖσθαι δικαιοπραγοῦντι καὶ παρ’ αὐτοῦ τοῦτο γαλήνην ἔχοντι.* M. Anton. *τῶν εἰς εἰαυτ. l. vii. sect. 28.* Vid. Horat. *Carm. l. iii. od. 3.*

^c Senec. *Epist. lix.*

^d Hæc Pauli verba Ananias et apparitores sic accipiebant, quasi excusaret Paulus quod sibi in istis malis constituto non satis in mentem venisset, quicum sibi res esset. Verum latentior sensus suberat, non esse eum sacerdotum, aut principem senatus, qui eas dignitates pretio comparasset. Didicerat enim hoc a Gamaliele Paulus : “ Judicem qui honoris consequendi causa pecunias dederit, reversum neque judicem esse, neque honorandum, sed asini habendum loco,” ut est in Titulo Talmudico de Synedrio. Grot. in loc.

evil of the ruler of the people." The apostle, who as he never laid aside the innocency of the dove, so knew how, when occasion was, to make use of the wisdom of the serpent, perceiving the council to consist partly of Sadducees and partly of Pharisees, openly told them that he was a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee, and that the main thing he was questioned for was his belief of a future resurrection. This quickly divided the council; the Pharisees being zealous patrons of that article, and the Sadducees as stiffly denying that there is either angel (that is, of a spiritual and immortal nature, really subsisting of itself, for otherwise they cannot be supposed to have utterly denied all sorts of angels, seeing they owned the Pentateuch, wherein there is frequent mention of them) or spirit, or that human souls do exist in a separate state, and, consequently, that there is no resurrection. Presently, the doctors of the law, who were Pharisees, stood up to acquit him, affirming he had done nothing amiss; that it was possible he had received some intimation from heaven by an angel, or the revelation of the Holy Spirit; and if so, then, in opposing his doctrine, they might fight against God himself.

IX. Great were the dissensions in the council about this matter, insomuch that the governor, fearing St. Paul would be torn in pieces, commanded the soldiers to take him from the bar, and return him back into the castle. That night, to comfort him after all his frights and fears, God was pleased to appear to him in a vision, encouraging him to constancy and resolution; assuring him, that as he had borne witness to his cause at Jerusalem, so, in despite of all his enemies, he should live to bear his testimony even at Rome itself. The next morning, the Jews, who could as well cease to be, as to be mischievous and malicious, finding that these dilatory proceedings were not like to do the work, resolved upon a quicker despatch. To which end, above forty of them entered into a wicked confederacy, which they ratified by oath and execration, never to eat or drink till they had killed him: and having acquainted the Sanhedrim with their design, they entreated them to importune the governor, that he might again the next day be brought down before them, under pretence of a more strict trial of his case, and that they themselves would lie in ambush by the way, and not fail to despatch him. But that Divine Providence that peculiarly superintends the safety of good

men, disappoints the devices of the crafty. The design was discovered to St. Paul by a nephew of his, and by him imparted to the governor, who immediately commanded two parties of foot and horse to be ready by nine of the clock that night, and provision to be made for St. Paul's carriage to Felix, the Roman governor of that province: to whom also he wrote, signifying whom he had sent, how the Jews had used him, and that his enemies also should appear before him to manage the charge and accusation. Accordingly, he was by night conducted to Antipatris, and afterwards to Cæsarea; where the letters being delivered to Felix, the apostle was presented to him: and finding that he belonged to the province of Cilicia, he told him, that as soon as his accusers were arrived, he should have an hearing; commanding him, in the mean time, to be secured in the place called Herod's hall.

SECTION VI.

OF ST. PAUL, FROM HIS FIRST TRIAL BEFORE FELIX TILL HIS COMING
TO ROME.

St. Paul impleaded before Felix by Tertullus the Jewish advocate. His charge of sedition, heresy, and profanation of the temple. St. Paul's reply to the several parts of the charge. His second hearing before Felix and Drusilla. His smart and impartial reasoning. Felix's great injustice and oppression: his luxury and intemperance, bribery and covetousness. St. Paul's arraignment before Festus, Felix's successor, at Cæsarea. His appeal to Cæsar. The nature and manner of those appeals. He is again brought before Festus and Agrippa. His vindication of himself, and the goodness of his cause. His being acquitted by his judges of any capital crime. His voyage to Rome. The trouble and danger of it. Their shipwreck, and being cast upon the island Melita. Their courteous entertainment by the Barbarians, and their different censure of St. Paul. The civil usage of the governor, and his conversion to Christianity. St. Paul met and conducted by Christians to Rome.

Nor many days after, down comes Ananias the high-priest,^y with some others of the Sanhedrim, to Cæsarea, accompanied with Tertullus their advocate; who in a short but neat speech, set off with all the flattering and insinuating arts of eloquence, began to implead our apostle, charging him with sedition, heresy, and the profanation of the temple: that they would have saved him the

^y Acts xxiv. 1.

trouble of this hearing, by judging him according to their own law, had not Lysias the commander violently taken him from them, and sent both them and him down thither: to all which the Jews that were with him gave in their vote and testimony. St. Paul, having leave from Felix to defend himself, and having told him, how much he was satisfied that he was to plead before one who for so many years had been governor of that nation, distinctly answered to the several parts of the charge.

II. And first for sedition, he point-blank denied it, affirming that they found him behaving himself quietly and peaceably in the temple, not so much as disputing there, nor stirring up the people either in the synagogues, or any other place of the city. And though this was plausibly pretended by them, yet were they never able to make it good. As for the charge of heresy, that he was a "ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes," he ingenuously acknowledged, that after the way which they counted heresy, so he worshipped God, the same way in substance wherein all the patriarchs of the Jewish nation had worshipped God before him, taking nothing into his creed but what the authentic writings of the Jews themselves did own and justify: that he firmly believed, what the better of themselves were ready to grant, another life and a future resurrection: in the hope and expectation whereof he was careful to live unblamable, and conscientiously to do his duty both to God and men. As for the third part of the charge, his profaning of the temple, he shews how little foundation there was for it; that the design of his coming to Jerusalem was to bring charitable contributions to his distressed brethren; that he was indeed in the temple, but not as some Asiatic Jews falsely suggested, either with tumult or with multitude, but only purifying himself according to the rites and customs of the Mosaic law: and that if any would affirm the contrary, they should come now into open court and make it good. Nay, that he appealed to those of the Sanhedrim that were there present, whether he had not been acquitted by their own great council at Jerusalem, where nothing of moment had been laid to his charge, except by them of the Sadducean party, who quarrelled with him only for asserting the doctrine of the resurrection. Felix having thus heard both parties argue, refused to make any final determination in the case, till he had more fully advised about it, and spoken with Lysias, commander

of the garrison, who was best able to give an account of the sedition and the tumult; commanding, in the mean time, that St. Paul should be under guard, but yet in so free a custody, that none of his friends should be hindered from visiting him, or performing any office of kindness and friendship to him.

III. It was not long after this, before his wife Drusilla (a Jewess, daughter of the elder Herod, and whom Tacitus, I fear by a mistake for his former wife Drusilla, daughter to Juba king of Mauritania, makes niece to Antony and Cleopatra) came to him to Cæsarea: who being present, he sent for St. Paul to appear before them, and gave him leave to discourse concerning the doctrine of Christianity. In his discourse, he took occasion particularly to insist upon the great obligation which the laws of Christ lay upon men to justice and righteousness toward one another, to sobriety and chastity both towards themselves and others, withal urging that severe and impartial account that must be given in the judgment of the other world, wherein men shall be arraigned for all the actions of their past life, and be eternally punished or rewarded according to their works: a discourse wisely adapted by the apostle to Felix's state and temper. But corrosives are very uneasy to a guilty mind: men naturally hate that which "brings their sins to their remembrance," and sharpens the sting of a violated conscience. The prince was so nettled with the apostle's reasonings, that he fell a trembling, and caused the apostle to break off abruptly, telling him, he would hear the rest at some other season. And good reason there was that Felix's conscience should be sensibly alarmed with these reflections, being a man notoriously infamous for rapine and violence. Tacitus tells us of him,² that he made his will the law of his government, practising all manner of cruelty and injustice. And then for incontinency, he was given over to luxury and debauchery, for the compassing whereof he scrupled not to violate all laws both of God and man; whereof this very wife Drusilla was a famous instance: ^a for being married by her brother to Azis king of the Emisenes, Felix, who had heard of her incomparable beauty, by the help of Simon the magician, a Jew of Cyprus, ravished her from her husband's bed, and in defiance of all law and right kept her for his own wife. To these qualities he had added bribery and covetousness, and

² Histor. l. v. c. 9. vid. Annal. l. xii. c. 54.

^a Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xx. c. 5.

therefore frequently sent for St. Paul to discourse with him, expecting that he should have given him a considerable sum for his release; and the rather probably, because he had heard that St. Paul had lately brought up great sums of money to Jerusalem. But finding no offers made, either by the apostle or his friends, he kept him prisoner for two years together, so long as himself continued procurator of that nation; when being displaced by Nero, he left St. Paul still in prison, on purpose to gratify the Jews, and engage them to speak better of him after his departure from them.

IV. To him succeeded Portius Festus in the procuratorship of the province, at whose first coming to Jerusalem,^b the high-priest and Sanhedrim presently began to prefer to him an indictment against St. Paul, desiring that, in order to his trial, he might be sent for up from Cæsarea; designing, under this pretence, that some assassins should lie in the way to murder him. Festus told them, that he himself was going shortly for Cæsarea, and that if they had any thing against St. Paul, they should come down thither and accuse him. Accordingly, being come to Cæsarea, and sitting in open judicature, the Jews began to renew the charge which they had heretofore brought against St. Paul: of all which he cleared himself, they not being able to make any proof against him. However, Festus, being willing to oblige the Jews in the entrance upon his government, asked him, whether he would go up and be tried before him at Jerusalem? The apostle, well understanding the consequences of that proposal, told him, that he was a Roman, and therefore ought to be judged by their laws; that he stood now at Cæsar's own judgment-seat, (as indeed what was done by the emperor's procurator in any province, the law reckoned as done by the emperor himself,^c) and though he should submit to the Jewish tribunal, yet he himself saw, that they had nothing which they could prove against him: that if he had done any thing which really deserved capital punishment, he was willing to undergo it; but if not, he ought not to be delivered over to his enemies, who were beforehand resolved to take away his life. However, as the safest course, he solemnly made his appeal to the Roman emperor, who should judge between them: whereupon Festus, advising with the Jewish Sanhedrim, received his appeal, and told him he

^b Acts xxv. 1.

^c L. i. ff. de Offic. Procur. Cæsar. lib. i. tit. xix.

should go to Cæsar. This way of appealing was frequent among the Romans; introduced to defend and secure the lives and fortunes of the populace from the unjust encroachments and over-rigorous severities of the magistrates, whereby it was lawful, in cases of oppression, to appeal to the people for redress and rescue, a thing more than once and again settled by the sanction of the Valerian laws. These appeals were wont to be made in writing,^d by appellatory libels given in, wherein was contained an account of the appellant, the person against whom, and from whose sentence he did appeal: but where the case was done in open court, it was enough for the criminal verbally to declare that he did appeal. In great and weighty cases appeals were made to the prince himself, and that not only at Rome, but in the provinces of the empire; all proconsuls and governors of provinces being strictly forbidden to execute,^e scourge, bind, or put any badge of servility upon a citizen, or any that had the privilege of a citizen of Rome, who had made his appeal, or any ways to hinder him from going thither to obtain justice at the hands of the emperor, who had as much regard to the liberty of his subjects, (says the law itself,) as they could have of their good-will and obedience to him. And this was exactly St. Paul's case, who knowing that he should have no fair and equitable dealing at the hands of the governor, when once he came to be swayed by the Jews, his sworn and inveterate enemies, appealed from him to the emperor; the reason why Festus durst not deny his demand, it being a privilege so often, so plainly settled and confirmed by the Roman laws.

V. Some time after, king Agrippa, who succeeded Herod in the tetrarchate of Galilee, and his sister Bernice came to Cæsarea, to make a visit to the new-come governor. To him Festus gave an account of St. Paul, and the great stir and trouble that had been made about him, and how, for his safety and vindication, he had immediately appealed to Cæsar. Agrippa was very desirous to see and hear him, and accordingly the next day, the king and his sister, accompanied with Festus the governor, and other persons of quality, came into the court with a pompous and magnificent retinue, where the prisoner was brought forth before him. Festus having acquainted the king and the assembly,

^d Leg. i. sect. 4. ff. de appellat. lib. xlix. tit. i. Leg. ii. et iii. *ibid*.

^e *Ibid*. Leg. xxv. et l. vii. ff. ad Leg. Jul. de vi public. lib. xlviii. tit. vi.

how much he had been solicited by the Jews, both at Cæsarea and Jerusalem, concerning the prisoner at the bar, that as a notorious malefactor he might be put to death; but that having found him guilty of no capital crime, and the prisoner himself having appealed to Cæsar, he was resolved to send him to Rome; but yet was willing to have his case again discussed before Agrippa, that so he might be furnished with some material instructions to send along with him, since it was very absurd to send a prisoner without signifying what crimes were charged upon him.

VI. Hereupon Agrippa told the apostle,^f he had liberty to make his own defence: to whom, after silence made, he particularly addressed his speech. He tells him, in the first place, what a happiness he had, that he was to plead before one so exactly versed in all the rites and customs, the questions and the controversies of the Jewish law; that the Jews themselves knew what had been the course and manner of his life, how he had been educated under the institutions of the Pharisees, the strictest sect of the whole Jewish religion, and had been particularly disquieted and arraigned for what had been the constant belief of all their fathers, what was sufficiently credible in itself, and plainly enough revealed in the scripture, the resurrection of the dead. He next gave him an account with what a bitter and implacable zeal he had formerly persecuted Christianity; told him the whole story and method of his conversion; and that in compliance with a particular vision from heaven, he had preached repentance and reformation of life, first to the Jews, and then after to the Gentiles: that it was for no other things than these that the Jews apprehended him in the temple, and designed to murder him; but being rescued and upheld by a divine power, he continued in this testimony to this day, asserting nothing but what was perfectly agreeable to Moses and the prophets, who had plainly foretold that the Messiah should both be put to death and rise again, and by his doctrine enlighten both the Jewish and the Gentile world. While he was thus discoursing, Festus openly cried out, that he talked like a madman; that his over-much study had put him beside himself. The apostle calmly replied, he was far from being transported with idle and distracted humours; that he spake nothing but what was most true and real in itself, and what very well became that grave

^f Acts xxvi. 1.

sober auditory. And then again, addressing himself to Agrippa, told him, that these things having been open and public, he could not but be acquainted with them; that he was confident that he believed the prophets, and must needs therefore know that those prophecies were fulfilled in Christ. Hereat Agrippa replied, that he had in some degree persuaded him to embrace the Christian faith. To which the apostle returned, that he heartily prayed, that not only he, but the whole auditory were, not only in some measure, but altogether, though not prisoners, yet as much Christians as he himself was. This done, the king and the governor and the rest of the council withdrew a while, to confer privately about this matter; and finding, by the accusations brought against him, that he was not guilty by the Roman laws of any capital offence, no nor of any that deserved so much as imprisonment, Agrippa told Festus, that he might have been released, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar. For the appeal being once made, the judge had then no power either to absolve or condemn; the cause being entirely reserved to the cognizance of that superior to whom the criminal had appealed.

VII. It was now finally resolved that St. Paul should be sent to Rome:^s in order whereunto he was, with some other prisoners of remark, committed to the charge of Julius, commander of a company belonging to the legion of Augustus; accompanied in this voyage by St. Luke, Aristarchus, Trophimus, and some others. In September, Ann. Chr. 56, or, as others, 57, they went on board a ship of Adramyttium and sailed to Sidon, where the captain civilly gave the apostle leave to go ashore to visit his friends and refresh himself: hence to Cyprus, till they came to the Fair-Havens, a place near Myra, a city of Lysia. Here winter growing on, and St. Paul, foreseeing it would be a dangerous voyage, persuaded them to put in and winter: but the captain preferring the judgment of the master of the ship, and especially because of the incommodiousness of the harbour, resolved, if possible, to reach Phœnice, a port of Crete, and to winter there. But it was not long before they found themselves disappointed of their hopes: for the calm southerly gale, that blew before, suddenly changed into a stormy and blustering north-east wind, which so bore down all before it, that they were forced to let the ship drive at the pleasure of the wind; but, as much as

^s Acts xxvii. 1.

might be, to prevent splitting or running aground, they threw out a great part of their lading and the tackle of the ship. Fourteen days they remained in this desperate and uncomfortable condition, neither sun nor stars appearing for a great part of the time; the apostle putting them in mind how ill-advised they were in not taking his counsel: howbeit they should be of good cheer, for that that God whom he served and worshipped, had the last night purposely sent an angel from heaven to let him know, that notwithstanding the present danger they were in, yet that he should be brought safe before Nero; that they should be shipwrecked, indeed, and cast upon an island, but that for his sake God had spared all in the ship, not one whereof should miscarry; and that he did not doubt but that it would accordingly come to pass. On the fourteenth night, upon sounding, they found themselves nigh some coast; and therefore, to avoid rocks, thought good to come to an anchor, till the morning might give them better information. In the mean time, the seamen (who best understood the danger) were preparing to get into the skiff, to save themselves: which St. Paul espying, told the captain, that unless they all stayed in the ship, none could be safe: whereupon the soldiers cut the ropes, and let the skiff fall off into the sea. Between this and daybreak, the apostle advised them to eat and refresh themselves, having all this time kept no ordinary and regular meals, assuring them they should all escape: himself first taking bread, and having blessed God for it before them all, the rest followed his example, and cheerfully fell to their meat: which done, they lightened the ship of what remained, and endeavoured to put into a creek which they discovered not far off. But falling into a place where two seas met, the fore part of the ship ran aground while the hinder part was beaten in pieces with the violence of the waves. Awakened with the danger they were in, the soldiers cried out to kill the prisoners, to prevent their escape: which the captain, desirous to save St. Paul, and probably in confidence of what he had told them, refused to do; commanding that every one should shift for himself: the issue was, that part by swimming, part on planks, part on pieces of the broken ship, they all, to the number of two hundred three-score and sixteen, (the whole number in the ship,) got safe to shore.

VIII. The island upon which they were cast was Melita,

(now Malta^b), situate in the Libyan sea, between Syracuse and Africa. Here they found civility among barbarians, and the plain acknowledgments of a divine justice written among the naked and untutored notions of men's minds. The people treated them with great humanity, entertaining them with all necessary accommodations; but while St. Paul was throwing sticks upon the fire, a viper, dislodged by the heat, came out of the wood, and fastened on his hand. This the people no sooner espied, but presently concluded that surely he was some notorious murderer, whom though the divine vengeance had suffered to escape the hue and cry of the sea, yet had it only reserved him for a more public and solemn execution. But when they saw him shake it off into the fire, and not presently swell and drop down, they changed their opinions, and concluded him to be some god. So easily are light and credulous minds transported from one extreme to another. Not far off lived Publius, a man of great estate and authority, and (as we may probably guess from an inscription found there, and set down by Grotius,ⁱ wherein the *ΠΡΩΤΟΣ ΜΕΛΙΤΑΙΩΝ* is reckoned amongst the Roman officers,) governor of the island, by him they were courteously entertained three days at his own charge; and his father lying at that time sick of a fever and a dysentery, St. Paul went in, and having prayed, and laid his hands upon him, healed him; as he did also many of the inhabitants, who by this miracle were encouraged to bring their diseased to him: whereby great honours were heaped upon him, and both he and his company furnished with provisions necessary for the rest of their voyage. Nay, Publius himself is said by some to have been hereby converted to the faith,^k and by St. Paul to have been constituted bishop of the island; and that this was he that succeeded St. Denys, the Areopagite, in the see of Athens, and was afterwards crowned with martyrdom.

IX. After three months' stay in this island, they went aboard the *Castor and Pollux*, a ship of Alexandria, bound for Italy. At Syracuse they put in, and stayed three days; thence sailed to Rhegium, and so to Puteoli, where they landed, and finding some Christians there, stayed a week with them, and then set forward in their journey to Rome. The Christians at Rome having heard

^b Acts xxviii. 1.

ⁱ Annot. in loc.

^k Bar. ad Ann. 58. n. 173. Vid. Adon. marty. ad 12 Kal. Febr. Martyr. Rom. ad diem 21 Jan. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iv. c. 23.

of their arrival, several of them came part of the way to meet them : some as far as the Three Taverns, a place thirty-three miles from Rome ; others as far as Appii Forum, fifty-one miles distant thence. Great was their mutual salutation, and the encouragement which the apostle received by it, glad no doubt to see that Christians found so much liberty at Rome. By them he was conducted in a kind of triumph into the city : where, when they were arrived, the rest of the prisoners were delivered over to the captain of the guard, and by him disposed in the common gaol, while St. Paul (probably at Julius's request and recommendation) was permitted to stay in a private house, only with a soldier to secure and guard him.

SECTION VII.

ST. PAUL'S ACTS, FROM HIS COMING TO ROME TILL HIS MARTYRDOM.

St. Paul's summoning the chief of the Jews at Rome, and his discourse to them. Their refractoriness and infidelity. His first hearing before Nero. The success of his preaching. Poppæa Sabina, Nero's concubine, one of his converts. Tacitus's character of her. Onesimus converted by St. Paul at Rome, and sent back with an epistle to Philemon his master. The great obligation which Christianity lays upon servants to diligence and fidelity in their duty. The rigorous and arbitrary power of masters over servants by the Roman laws. This mitigated by the laws of the gospel. St. Paul's epistle to the Philippians, upon what occasion sent. His epistle to the Ephesians, and another to the Colossians. His second epistle to Timothy written (probably) at his first being at Rome. The epistle to the Hebrews, by whom written, and in what language. The aim and design of it. St. Paul's preaching the gospel in the West, and in what parts of it. His return to Rome, when. His imprisonment under Nero, and why. His being beheaded. Milk instead of blood said to flow from his body. Different accounts of the time of his suffering. His burial, where ; and the great church erected to his memory.

THE first thing St. Paul did after he came to Rome was to summon the heads of the Jewish consistory there, whom he acquainted with the cause and manner of his coming, that though he had been guilty of no violation of the law of their religion, yet had he been delivered by the Jews into the hands of the Roman governors ; who would have acquitted him once and again, as innocent of any capital offence, but by the perverseness of the Jews he was forced, not with an intention to charge his own nation, (already sufficiently odious to the Romans,) but

only to vindicate and clear himself, to make his appeal to Cæsar; that being come, he had sent for them, to let them know, that it was for his constant asserting the resurrection, the hope of all true Israelites, that he was bound with that chain which they saw upon him. The Jews replied, that they had received no advice concerning him, nor had any of the nation that came from Judea brought any charge against him: only for the religion which he had espoused, they desired to be a little better informed about it, it being every where decried both by Jew and Gentile. Accordingly, upon a day appointed, he discoursed to them from morning to night concerning the religion and doctrine of the holy Jesus, proving from the promises and predictions of the Old Testament, that he was the true Messiah. His discourse succeeded not with all alike; some being convinced, others persisted in their infidelity: and as they were departing, in some discontent at each other, the apostle told them, it was now too plain, God had accomplished upon them the prophetic curse of being left to their own wilful hardness and impenitency, to be blind at noon-day, and to run themselves against all means and methods into irrecoverable ruin. That since the case was thus with them, they must expect, that henceforth he should turn his preaching to the Gentiles, who would be most ready to entertain what they had so scornfully rejected, the glad tidings of the gospel.

II. It was not, probably, long after this, that he was brought to his first hearing before the emperor, where those friends, whom he most expected should stand by him, plainly deserted him; afraid, it seems, of appearing in so ticklish a cause before so unreasonable a judge, who governed himself by no other measures than the brutish and extravagant pleasure of his lust or humour. But God stood by him, and encouraged him; as indeed divine consolations are many times then nearest to us, when human assistances are farthest from us. This cowardice of theirs the apostle had a charity large enough to cover, heartily praying, that it might not be brought in against them in the accounts of the great day. Two years he dwelt at Rome in an house which he hired for his own use, wherein he constantly employed himself in preaching and writing for the good of the church. He preached daily, without interruption, to all that came to him, and with good success; yea, even upon some

of the better rank and quality, and those belonging to the court itself. Among which the Roman Martyrology¹ reckons Torpes, an officer of prime note in Nero's palace, and afterwards a martyr for the faith; and Chrysostom (if Baronius cite him right)^m tells us of Nero's cupbearer, and one of his concubines, supposed by some to have been Poppæa Sabina, of whom Tacitus gives this character,ⁿ that she wanted nothing to render her one of the most accomplished ladies in the world, but a chaste and virtuous mind: and I know not how far it may seem to countenance her conversion, at least inclination, to a better religion than that of paganism, that Josephus styles her a pious woman,^o and tells us that she effectually solicited the cause of the Jews with her husband Nero; and what favours Josephus himself received from her at Rome, he relates in his own Life.^p

III. Amongst others of our apostle's converts at Rome was Onesimus, who had formerly been servant to Philemon, a person of eminency in Colosse, but had run away from his master, and taken things of some value with him. Having rambled as far as Rome, he was now converted by St. Paul, and by him returned with recommendatory letters to Philemon his master, to beg his pardon, and that he might be received into favour, being now of a much better temper, more faithful, and diligent, and useful to his master, than he had been before: as indeed Christianity, where it is heartily entertained, makes men good in all relations, no laws being so wisely contrived for the peace and happiness of the world as the laws of the gospel, as may appear by this particular case of servants; what admirable rules, what severe laws does it lay upon them for the discharge of their duties! it commands them to honour their masters as their superiors, and to take heed of making their authority light and cheap by familiar and contemptible thoughts and carriages; to obey them in all honest and lawful things; and that "not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart as unto God;" that they be faithful to the trust committed to them, and manage their masters' interest with as much care and conscience as if it were their own; that they entertain their reproofs, counsels, corrections, with all silence and sobriety, not

¹ Ad diem 17 Maii, p. 308.

^m Ad Ann. 59, n. 9. Vid. Chrysost. adv. vituper. vit. Monast. l. i. c. 4.

ⁿ Annal. l. xiii. c. 45.

^o Antiq. Jud. l. xx. c. 7.

^p De vit. sua, p. 999.

returning any rude surly answers ; and this carriage to be observed, not only to masters of a mild and gentle, but of a cross and peevish disposition ; that “ whatever they do, they do it heartily, not as to men only, but to the Lord ; knowing that of the Lord they shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for that they serve the Lord Christ.” Imbued with these excellent principles, Onesimus is again returned unto his master ; for Christian religion, though it improve men’s tempers, does not cancel their relations ; it teaches them to abide in their callings, and “ not to despise their masters, because they are brethren, but rather do them service, because they are faithful.” And being thus improved, St. Paul the more confidently begged his pardon. And, indeed, had not Philemon been a Christian, and by the principles of his religion both disposed and obliged to mildness and mercy, there had been great reason why St. Paul should be thus importunate with him for Onesimus’s pardon, the case of servants in those days being very hard ; for all masters were looked upon as having an unlimited power over their servants, and that not only by the Roman,¹ but by the laws of all nations, whereby, without asking the magistrate’s leave, or any public and formal trial, they might adjudge and condemn them to what work or punishment they pleased, even to the taking away of life itself. But the severity and exorbitancy of this power was afterwards somewhat curbed by the laws of succeeding emperors, especially after the empire submitted itself to Christianity, which makes better provision for persons in that capacity and relation, and, in case of unjust and over-rigorous usage, enables them to appeal to a more righteous and impartial tribunal, where master and servant shall both stand upon even ground, “ where he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done ; and there is no respect of persons.”

IV. The Christians at Philippi having heard of St. Paul’s imprisonment at Rome, and not knowing what straits he might be reduced to, raised a contribution for him, and sent it by Epaphroditus their bishop, who was now come to Rome, where he shortly after fell dangerously sick : but being recovered, and upon the point to return, by him St. Paul sent his epistle to the Philippians, wherein he gives them some account of the state of

¹ L. i. et ii. ff. de his, qui sui vel alieni juris sunt, lib. i. tit. vi. Vid. Instit. lib. i. tit. viii.

affairs at Rome, gratefully acknowledges their kindness to him, and warns them of those dangerous opinions which the Judaizing teachers began to vent among them. The apostle had heretofore for some years lived at Ephesus, and perfectly understood the state and condition of that place ; and therefore now by Tychicus writes his epistle to the Ephesians, endeavouring to countermine the principles and practices both of Jews and Gentiles, to confirm them in the belief and obedience of the Christian doctrine, to represent the infinite riches of the divine goodness in admitting the Gentile world to the unsearchable treasures of Christianity, especially pressing them to express the life and spirit of it in the general duties of religion, and in the duties of their particular relations. Much about the same time, or a little after, he wrote his epistle to the Colossians, where he had never been, and sent it by Epaphras, who for some time had been his fellow-prisoner at Rome. The design of it is, for the greatest part, the same with that to the Ephesians, to settle and confirm them in the faith of the gospel, against the errors both of Judaism and the superstitious observances of the heathen world, some whereof had taken root amongst them.

V. It is not improbable, but that about this, or rather some considerable time before, St. Paul wrote his second epistle to Timothy. I know Eusebius and the ancients, and most moderns after them, will have it written a little before his martyrdom, induced thereunto by that passage in it, that he was then "ready to be offered, and that the time of his departure was at hand." But surely it is most reasonable to think, that it was written at his first being at Rome, and that at his first coming thither, presently after his trial before Nero. Accordingly, the passage before mentioned may import no more, than that he was in imminent danger of his life, and had received the sentence of death in himself, not hoping to escape out of the paws of Nero ; but that "God had delivered him out of the mouth of the lion," i. e. the great danger he was in at his coming thither : which exactly agrees to his case at his first being at Rome, but cannot be reconciled with his last coming thither ; together with many more circumstances in this epistle, which render it next door to certain. In it he appoints Timothy shortly to come to him ; who accordingly came, whose name is joined together with his in the front of several epistles, to the Philippians, Colossians, and to

Philemon. The only thing that can be levelled against this is, that, in his epistle to Timothy, he tells him, that he had sent Tychicus to Ephesus, by whom it is plain that the epistles to the Ephesians and Philippians were despatched; and that therefore this to Timothy must be written after them. But I see no inconvenience to affirm, that Tychicus might come to Rome presently after St. Paul's arrival there, be by him immediately sent back to Ephesus upon some emergent affair of that church; and after his return to Rome be sent with those two epistles. The design of the epistle was to excite the holy man to a mighty zeal and diligence, care and fidelity in his office, and to antidote the people against those poisonous principles that in those parts especially began to debauch the minds of men.

VI. As for the epistle to the Hebrews, it is very uncertain when, or whence, and (for some ages doubted) by whom it was written. Eusebius tells us,^r it was not received by many, because rejected by the church of Rome as none of St. Paul's genuine epistles. Origen affirms the style and phrase of it to be more fine and elegant,^s and to contain in it a richer vein of purer Greek than is usually found in St. Paul's epistles; as every one, that is able to judge of a style, must needs confess: that the sentences indeed are grave and weighty, and such as breathe the spirit and majesty of an apostle: that therefore it was his judgment, that the matter contained in it had been dictated by some apostle, but that it had been put into phrase, form, and order by some other person that did attend upon him: that if any church owned it for St. Paul's, they were not to be condemned, it not being without reason by the ancients ascribed to him; though God only knew who was the true author of it. He farther tells us, that report had handed it down to his time, that it had been composed partly by Clemens of Rome, partly by Luke the Evangelist. Tertullian adds,^t that it was writ by Barnabas. What seems most likely, in such variety of opinions, is, that St. Paul originally wrote it in Hebrew, it being to be sent to the Jews, his countrymen; and by some other person, probably St. Luke or Clemens Romanus, translated into Greek; especially since both Eusebius^u and St. Jerome^x observed of old such a

^r Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 3.

^s Apud Euseb. *ibid.* l. vi. c. 25.

^t De Pudicit. c. 20. Vid. Clem. Alex. in lib. Hyp. apud Euseb. l. vi. c. 14.

^u Euseb. l. iii. c. 38.

^x Hier. de Scrip. Eccl. in Clem.

great affinity, both in style and sense, between this and Clement's epistle to the Corinthians, as thence positively to conclude him to be the translator of it. It was written, as we may conjecture, a little after he was restored to his liberty, and probably while he was yet in some parts of Italy,^y whence he dates his salutations. The main design of it is to magnify Christ and the religion of the gospel, above Moses and the Jewish economy and ministration; that by this means he might the better establish and confirm the convert Jews in the firm belief and profession of Christianity, notwithstanding those sufferings and persecutions that came upon them; endeavouring throughout to arm and fortify them against apostacy from that noble and excellent religion, wherein they had so happily engaged themselves. And great need there was for the apostle severely to urge them to it, heavy persecutions, both from Jews and Gentiles, pressing in upon them on every side, besides those trains of specious and plausible insinuations that were laid to reduce them to their ancient institutions. Hence the apostle calls apostacy "the sin which did so easily beset them,"^z to which there were such frequent temptations, and into which they were so prone to be betrayed in those suffering times. And the more to deter them from it, he once and again sets before them the dreadful state and condition of apostates,^a those who have been once enlightened, and baptized into the Christian faith, tasted the promises of the gospel, and been made partakers of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, those powers which in the world to come, or this new state of things were to be conferred upon the church, if after all this these men fall away, and renounce Christianity, it is very hard, and even impossible, to renew them again unto repentance. For by this means they trod under foot, and crucified the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame, profaned the blood of the covenant, and did despite to the spirit of grace. So that to sin thus wilfully after they had received the knowledge of the truth, there could remain for them no more sacrifice for sins, nothing but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which should devour these adversaries. And a fearful thing it was in such circumstances to fall into the hands of the living God, who had particularly said of this sort of sinners, that "if any man drew back, his soul

^y Cap. xiii. 24.^z Heb. xii. 1.^a Cap. vi. 4—6. cap. x. 26—29.

should have no pleasure in him." Hence it is, that every where in this epistle he mixes exhortations to this purpose: that "they would give earnest heed to the things which they had heard, lest at any time they should let them slip: that they would hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end, and beware lest by an evil heart of unbelief they departed from the living God: that they would labour to enter into his rest, lest any man fall after the example of unbelief: that leaving the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, they would go on to perfection, shewing diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; not being slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises: that they would hold fast the profession of the faith without wavering, not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, (as the manner of some was,) nor cast away their confidence, which had great recompense of reward: that they had need of patience, that after they had done the will of God, they might receive the promise: that they would not be of them who drew back unto perdition, but of them that believed to the saving of the soul: that being encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," who with the most unconquerable constancy and resolution had all holden on in the way to heaven, "they would lay aside every weight, and the sin which did so easily beset them, and run with patience the race that was set before them, especially looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, who endured the cross, and despised the shame; that therefore they should consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest they should be wearied and faint in their minds; for that they had not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin; looking diligently lest any man should fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up should trouble them, and thereby many be defiled." By all which, and much more that might be observed to this purpose, it is evident, what our apostle's great design was in this excellent epistle.

VII. Our apostle being now, after two years' custody, perfectly restored to liberty, remembered that he was "the apostle of the Gentiles," and had therefore a larger diocese than Rome, and accordingly prepared himself for a greater circuit, though which way he directed his course is not absolutely certain. By some he is said to have returned back into Greece, and the parts of

Asia, upon no other ground, that I know of, than a few intimations in some of his epistles that he intended to do so. By others he is thought to have preached both in the Eastern and Western parts, which is not inconsistent with the time he had after his departure from Rome. But of the latter we have better evidence. Sure I am, an author beyond all exception, St. Paul's contemporary and fellow-labourer, I mean Clemens,^b in his famous epistle to the Corinthians, expressly tells us, that being a preacher both in the East and West, he taught righteousness to the whole world, and went to the utmost bounds of the West. Which makes me the more wonder at the confidence of one,^c (otherwise a man of great parts and learning,) who so peremptorily denies that ever our apostle preached in the West, merely because there are no monuments left in primitive antiquity of any particular churches there founded by him: as if all the particular passages of his life, done at so vast a distance, must needs have been recorded, or those records have come down to us, when it is so notoriously known, that almost all the writings and monuments of those first ages of Christianity are long since perished; or as if we were not sufficiently assured of the thing in general, though not of what particular he did there. Probable it is, that he went into Spain,^d a thing which himself tells us he had formerly once and again resolved on. Certain it is, that the ancients do generally assert it,^e without seeming in the least to doubt of it. Theodoret and others tell us, that he preached not only in Spain, but that he went to other nations, and brought the gospel into the isles of the sea; by which he undoubtedly means Britain, and therefore elsewhere reckons the Gauls and Britains among the nations, which the apostles, and particularly the tent-maker, persuaded to embrace the law of Christ. Nor is he the only man that has said it, others having given in their testimony and suffrage in this case.^f

VIII. To what other parts of the world St. Paul preached

^b Ep. ad Corinth. s. 5.

^c L. Cappell. Append. ad Hist. Apost. p. 33.

^d Rom. xv. 24—28.

^e Epiphanius. Hæres. xxvii. s. 6. Chrysostomus. de Laud. Paul. Hom. vii. vol. ii. p. 516. Cyril. Catech. xvii. s. 13. Theodoret. in 2 Tim. iv. 16. et in Psalm. cxvi. id. de cur. Græc. Affect. Serm. ix. Athanasius. Epist. ad Dracont. s. 4.

^f Sophron. Serm. de natali. App. "Transit et Oceanum, vel qua facit insula portum, Quasque Britannus habet terras atque ultima Thule." Venantius Fortunatus. de vit. Martin. l. iii. non procul a fin.

the gospel, we find no certain footsteps in antiquity, nor any farther mention of him till his return to Rome, which probably was about the eighth or ninth year of Nero's reign. Here he met with Peter, and was, together with him, thrown into prison, no doubt in the general persecution raised against the Christians, under the pretence that they had fired the city. Besides the general, we may reasonably suppose there were particular causes of his imprisonment. Some of the ancients make him engaged with Peter in procuring the fall of Simon Magus, and that that derived the emperor's fury and rage upon him: St. Chrysostom gives us this account; ^s that having converted one of Nero's concubines, a woman of whom he was infinitely fond, and reduced her to a life of great strictness and chastity, so that now she wholly refused to comply with his wanton and impure embraces; the emperor stormed hereat, calling the apostle a villain and impostor, a wretched perverter and debaucher of others, giving order that he should be cast into prison, and, when he still persisted to persuade the lady to continue her chaste and pious resolutions, commanding him to be put to death.

IX. How long he remained in prison is not certainly known; at last his execution was resolved on: what his preparatory treatment was, whether scourged, as malefactors were wont to be in order to their death, we find not. As a Roman citizen, by the Valerian and the Porcian law he was exempted from it: though by the law of the twelve tables, notorious malefactors, condemned by the centuriate assemblies, were first to be scourged, and then put to death: and Baronius tells us, ^h that in the church of St. Mary, beyond the bridge in Rome, the pillars are yet extant, to which both Peter and Paul are said to have been bound and scourged. As he was led to execution, he is said to have converted three of the soldiers that were sent to conduct and guard him, who within few days after, by the emperor's command, became martyrs for the faith. Being come to the place, which was the Aquæ Salvæ, three miles from Rome, after some solemn preparation, he cheerfully gave his neck to the fatal stroke. As a Roman, he might not be put upon the cross, too infamous a death for any but the worst of slaves and malefactors, and therefore was beheaded; accounted a more noble kind of death, not among the Romans only, but among other nations,

^s Adv. vit. Monast. vituperat. l. i. c. 4.

^h Ad Ann. 69. n. 8.

as being fitter for persons of better quality, and more ingenuous education :¹ and from this instrument of his execution the custom, no doubt, first arose, that in all pictures and images of this apostle, he is constantly represented with a sword in his right hand. Tradition reports, (justified herein by the suffrage of many of the fathers,²) that when he was beheaded, a liquor more like milk than blood flowed from his veins, and spirted upon the clothes of his executioner ; and had I list or leisure for such things, I might entertain the reader with the little glosses that are made upon it. St. Chrysostom adds, that it became a means of converting his executioner and many more to the faith ; and that the apostle suffered in the sixty-eighth year of his age. Some question there is whether he suffered at the same time with Peter ; many of the ancients positively affirm,³ that both suffered on the same day and year : but others,⁴ though allowing the same day, tell us that St. Paul suffered not till the year after ; nay, some interpose the distance of several years. A manuscript writer of the lives and travels of Peter and Paul,⁵ brought amongst other venerable monuments of antiquity out of Greece, will have Paul to have suffered no less than five years after Peter, which he justifies by the authority of no less than Justin Martyr and Irenæus. But what credit is to be given to this nameless author, I see not, and therefore lay no weight upon it, nor think it fit to be put into the balance with the testimonies of the ancients. Certainly, if he suffered not at the very same time with Peter, it could not be long after, not above a year at most. The best is, which of them soever started first, they both came at last to the same end of the race, to those palms and crowns which are reserved for all good men in heaven, but most eminently for the martyrs of the Christian faith.

X. He was buried in the Via Ostiensis, about two miles from

¹ Zenoph. de Exped. Cyri. l. ii. in fin. Servi sunt in crucem sublati, militibus cervices abscissæ. Hist. de Bell. Hispan. p. 460.

² Ambr. de nat. Petr. et Paul. Sermon. lxxviii. Chrysa. Sermon. in Petr. et Paul. a. 2. vol. viii. p. 10. inter spuria.

³ Dion. Corinth. ap. Euseb. l. ii. c. 25. Ambr. ib. Sermon. lxxvi. Max. Taur. Hom. v. de Petr. et Paul. p. 231.

⁴ Prudent. Peristeph. in Pass. Petr. et Paul. Hymn. xii. Arat. Act. Apost. l. ii. in fin. Aug. in natal Petri et Pauli, Sermon. ccv. a. 4. in append. vol. v. p. 340. Greg. Turon. de glor. Martyr. l. i. c. 29.

⁵ Apud P. Jun. not. in Clem. Ep. ad Cor. ad p. 8. forsan. ex S. Metaphr. qui totidem verbis eadem habet ap. Sur. ad 29 Jun. n. 23.

Rome, over whose grave, about the year 318,^o Constantine the Great, at the instance of pope Sylvester, built a stately church, within a farm which Lucina, a noble Christian matron of Rome, had long before settled upon that church. He adorned it with an hundred of the best marble columns, and beautified it with the most exquisite workmanship: the many rich gifts and endowments which he bestowed upon it being particularly set down in the Life of Sylvester. This church, as too narrow and little for the honour of so great an apostle, Valentinian, or rather Theodosius the emperor, (the one but finishing what the other began,) by a rescript directed to Sallustius,^p prefect of the city, caused to be taken down, and a larger and more noble church to be built in the room of it: farther beautified (as appears from an ancient inscription^q) by Placidia, the empress, at the persuasion of Leo, bishop of Rome. What other additions of wealth, honour, or stateliness it has received since, concerns not me to inquire.

SECTION VIII.

THE DESCRIPTION OF HIS PERSON AND TEMPER, TOGETHER WITH
AN ACCOUNT OF HIS WRITINGS.

The person of St. Paul described. His infirm constitution. His natural endowments. His ingenuous education, and admirable skill in human learning and sciences. The divine temper of his mind. His singular humility and condescension. His temperance and sobriety, and contempt of the world. Whether he lived a married or a single life. His great kindness and compassion. His charity to men's bodies and souls. His mighty zeal for religion. His admirable industry and diligence in his office. His unconquerable patience. The many great troubles he underwent. His constancy and fidelity in the profession of Christianity. His writings. His style and way of writing, what. St. Jerome's bold censure of it. The perplexedness and obscurity of his discourses, whence. The account given of it by the ancients. The order of his epistles, what. Placed not according to the time when, but the dignity of persons or places to which they were written. The subscriptions at the end of them, of what value. The writings fathered upon St. Paul. His gospel. A third epistle to the Corinthians. The epistle to the Laodiceans. His Apocalypse. His Acts. The epistles between him and Seneca.

THOUGH we have drawn St. Paul at large, in the account we have given of his life, yet may it be of use to represent him in little,

^o Damas. Pontif. in vit. Sylvest. i. vid. Onuphr. de 7. Urb. Basil.

^p Apud Bar. ad Ann. 386. ex Cod. Vatic. ^q Ibid. in Addend. ad vol. iv. p. 12.

in a brief account of his person, parts, and those graces and virtues for which he was more peculiarly eminent and remarkable. For his person, we find it thus described.^r He was low and of little stature, and somewhat stooping; his complexion fair; his countenance grave; his head small; his eyes carrying a kind of beauty and sweetness in them; his eyebrows a little hanging over; his nose long, but gracefully bending; his beard thick, and, like the hair on his head, mixed with gray hairs. Somewhat of this description may be learnt from Lucian,^s when in the person of Trypho, one of St. Paul's disciples, he calls him, by way of derision, "the high-nosed bald-pated Galilean," that was caught up through the air unto "the third heaven," where he learned great and excellent things. That he was very low, himself plainly intimates, when he tells us,^t they were wont to say of him, that "his bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible;" in which respect he is styled by Chrysostom,^u *ὁ τρίπηχυσ ἀνθρώπος*, "a man three cubits-[or a little more than four feet] high, and yet tall enough to reach heaven." He seems to have enjoyed no very firm and athletic constitution, being often subject to distempers; St. Jerome particularly reports,^x that he was frequently afflicted with the headache, and that this was thought by many to have been "the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan sent to buffet him;" and that probably he intended some such thing by "the temptation in his flesh," which he elsewhere speaks of:^y which however it may in general signify those afflictions that came upon him, yet does it primarily denote those diseases and infirmities that he was obnoxious to.

II. But how mean soever the cabinet was, there was a treasure within more precious and valuable, as will appear, if we survey the accomplishments of his mind. For as to his natural abilities and endowments, he seems to have had a clear and solid judgment, quick invention, a prompt and ready memory; all which were abundantly improved by art, and the advantages of a more liberal education. The schools of Tarsus had sharpened his discursive faculty by logic and the arts of reasoning, instructed him in the institutions of philosophy, and enriched him with the

^r Niceph. Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 37.

^s Philopat. vol. ii. p. 999.

^t 2 Cor. x. 10.

^u Serm. in Petr. et Paul. s. l. vol. viii. p. 8. inter spuria.

^x Com. in Gal. iv.

^y Gal. iv. 14.

furniture of all kinds of human learning. This gave him great advantage above others, and ever raised him to a mighty reputation for parts and learning ; insomuch that St. Chrysostom tells us of a dispute between a Christian and a Heathen,² wherein the Christian endeavoured to prove against the Gentile, that St. Paul was more learned and eloquent than Plato himself. How well he was versed, not only in the law of Moses and the writings of the prophets, but even in classic and foreign writers, he has left us sufficient ground to conclude, from those excellent sayings which here and there he quotes out of heathen authors : which as at once it shews that it is not unlawful to bring the spoils of Egypt into the service of the sanctuary,³ and to make use of the advantages of foreign studies and human literature to divine and excellent purposes, so does it argue his being greatly conversant in the paths of human learning, which upon every occasion he could so readily command. Indeed, he seemed to have been furnished out on purpose to be the doctor of the Gentiles, to contend with and confute the grave and the wise, the acute and the subtle, the sage and the learned of the heathen world, and to wound them (as Julian's word was) with arrows drawn out of their own quiver : though we do not find that, in his disputes with the Gentiles, he made much use of learning and philosophy ; it being more agreeable to the designs of the gospel, to confound the wisdom and learning of the world by the plain doctrine of the cross.

III. These were great accomplishments, and yet but a shadow to that divine temper of mind that was in him, which discovered itself through the whole course and method of his life. He was humble to the lowest step of abasement and condescension, none ever thinking better of others, or more meanly of himself. And though when he had to deal with envious and malicious adversaries, who, by vilifying his person, sought to obstruct his ministry, he knew how to magnify his office, and to let them know that he was "no whit inferior to the very chiefest apostles ;" yet out of this case he constantly declared to all the world, that he looked upon himself as an abortive, and an untimely birth ; as "the least of the apostles, not meet to be called an apostle ;" and, as if this were not enough, he makes a word on purpose to ex-

² In 1 ad Cor. c. i. Hom. iii. s. 4. vol. x. p. 20.

³ Clem. Alex. Strom. l. i. c. 14.

press his humility, styling himself *ἐλαχιστότερον*, "less than the least of all saints," yea, "the very chief of sinners." How freely, and that at every turn, does he confess what he was before his conversion; a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious both to God and men! Though honoured with peculiar acts of the highest grace and favour, taken up to an immediate converse with God in heaven, yet did not this swell him with a supercilious loftiness over the rest of his brethren: entrusted he was with great power and authority in the church, but never affected dominion over men's faith; nor any other place, than to be an helper of their joy; nor ever made use of his power but to the edification, not destruction of any. How studiously did he decline all honours and commendations that were heaped upon him? When some in the church of Corinth cried him up beyond all measures, and under the patronage of his name began to set up for a party, he severely rebuked them; told them that it was Christ, not he, that was crucified for them; that they had not been baptized into his name, which he was so far from, that he did not remember that he had baptized above three or four of them, and was heartily glad he had baptized no more, lest a foundation might have been laid for that suspicion; that this Paul, whom they so much extolled, was no more than a minister of Christ, whom our Lord had appointed to plant and build up his church.

IV. Great was his temperance and sobriety, so far from going beyond the bounds of regularity, that he abridged himself of the conveniences of lawful and necessary accommodations; frequent his hungerings and thirstings, not constrained only, but voluntary: it is probably thought that he very rarely drank any wine; certain, that by abstinence and mortification he kept under and subdued his body, reducing the extravagancy of the sensual appetites to a perfect subjection to the laws of reason. By this means he easily got above the world, and its charms and frowns; and his mind continually conversant in heaven, his thoughts were fixed there, his desires always ascending thither: what he taught others he practised himself; his conversation was in heaven, and his desires were to depart and to be with Christ; this world did neither arrest his affections nor disturb his fears, he was not taken with its applause nor frightened with its threatenings; he studied not to please men, nor valued the censures and judgments which

they passed upon him; he was not greedy of a great estate, or titles of honour, or rich presents from men, not seeking theirs but them: food and raiment was his bill of fare, and more than this he never cared for; accounting, that the less he was clogged with these things, the lighter he should march to heaven, especially travelling through a world overrun with troubles and persecutions. Upon this account, it is probable he kept himself always within a single life, though there want not some of the ancients who expressly reckon him in the number of the married apostles, as Clemens Alexandrinus,^b Ignatius,^c and some others. It is true, that passage is not to be found in the genuine epistle of Ignatius, but yet is extant in all those that are owned and published by the church of Rome, though they have not been wanting to banish it out of the world, having expunged St. Paul's name out of some ancient manuscripts, as the learned bishop Usher^d has, to their shame, sufficiently discovered to the world. But for the main of the question we can readily grant it, the scriptures seeming most to favour it, that though he asserted his power and liberty to marry as well as the rest, yet that he lived always a single life.

V. His kindness and charity was truly admirable; he had a compassionate tenderness for the poor, and a quick sense of the wants of others: to what church soever he came, it was one of his first cares to make provision for the poor, and to stir up the bounty of the rich and wealthy; nay, himself worked often with his own hands, not only to maintain himself, but to help and relieve them. But infinitely greater was his charity to the souls of men, fearing no dangers, refusing no labours, going through good and evil report, that he might gain men over to the knowledge of the truth, reduce them out of the crooked paths of vice and idolatry, and set them in the right way to eternal life; nay, so insatiable his thirst after the good of souls, that he affirms, that rather than his countrymen, the Jews, should miscarry by not believing and entertaining the gospel, he could be content, nay wished, that himself "might be accursed from Christ for their sake," i. e. that he might be anathematized and cut off from the

^b Clem. Alex. Strom. l. iii. c. 6.

^c Ignat. Ep. ad Philadelph. s. 4. vol. ii. p. 146. Euseb. l. iii. c. 30.

^d Usser. not. in Ignat. Epist. ad Philadelph. vid. James, his Corrupt. of the Faith. part ii. p. 57.

church of Christ, and not only lose the honour of the apostolate, but be reckoned in the number of the abject and execrable persons, such as those who are separated from the communion of the church: an instance of so large and passionate a charity, that lest it might not find room in men's belief, he ushered it in with his solemn appeal and attestation, that "he said the truth in Christ and lied not, his conscience bearing him witness in the Holy Ghost." And as he was infinitely solicitous to gain men over to the best religion in the world, so was he not less careful to keep them from being seduced from it, ready to suspect every thing that might "corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ." "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy," as he told the church of Corinth: "an affection of all others the most active and vigilant, and which is wont to inspire men with the most passionate care and concernment for the good of those for whom we have the highest measures of love and kindness. Nor was his charity to men greater than his zeal for God, endeavouring with all his might to promote the honour of his Master. Indeed, zeal seems to have had a deep foundation in the natural forwardness of his temper. How exceedingly zealous was he, while in the Jews' religion, of the traditions of his fathers; how earnest to vindicate and assert the divinity of the Mosaic dispensation, and to persecute all of a contrary way, even to rage and madness? And when afterwards turned into a right channel, it ran with as swift a current; carrying him out against all opposition to ruin the kingdom and the powers of darkness, to beat down idolatry, and to plant the world with right apprehensions of God and the true notions of religion. When at Athens he saw them so much overgrown with the grossest superstition and idolatry, giving the honour that was alone due to God to statues and images, his zeal began to ferment, and to boil up into paroxysms of indignation; and he could not but let them know the resentments of his mind, and how much herein they dishonoured God, the great Parent and Maker of the world.

VI. This zeal must needs put him upon a mighty diligence and industry in the execution of his office: warning, reproving, entreating, persuading, "preaching in season and out of season," by night and by day, by sea and land; no pains too much to be taken, no dangers too great to be overcome. For five and thirty

* 2 Cor. xi. 2, et vid. Chrysost. Hom. xxiii. s. 1. in 2 ad Cor. vol. x. p. 595.

years after his conversion, he seldom stayed long in one place ; from Jerusalem, through Arabia, Asia, Greece, round about to Illyricum, to Rome, and even to the utmost bounds of the Western world, “ fully preaching the gospel of Christ :” running (saith St. Jerome) from ocean to ocean, like the sun in the heavens, of which it is said, “ his going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it ;” sooner wanting ground to tread on, than a desire to propagate the faith of Christ. Nicephorus compares him to a bird in the air,^f that in a few years flew round the world ; Isidore the Pelusiot,^g to a winged husbandman, that flew from place to place to cultivate the world with the most excellent rules and institutions of life. And while the other apostles did, as it were, choose this or that particular province as the main sphere of their ministry, St. Paul overran the whole world to its utmost bounds and corners, planting all places where he came with the divine doctrines of the gospel. Nor in this course was he tired out with the dangers and difficulties that he met with, the troubles and oppositions that were raised against him : all which did but reflect the greater lustre upon his patience, whereof, indeed, (as Clement observes,^h) he became μέγιστος ὑπογραμμὸς, “ a most eminent pattern and exemplar,” enduring the biggest troubles and persecutions with a patience triumphant and unconquerable ; as will easily appear, if we take but a survey of what trials and sufferings he underwent, some part whereof are briefly summed up by himself :ⁱ “ In labours abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons frequent, in deaths oft ; thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice suffered shipwreck, a night and a day in the deep : in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren ; in weariness, in painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst ; in fastings often, in cold and nakedness : and besides these things that were without, that which daily came upon him, the care of all the churches.” An account, though very great, yet far short of what he endured ; and wherein, as Chrysostom observes,^k he does σφόδρα μετρίᾳζειν, “ modestly keep himself within his measures ;” for had he taken the liberty

^f Lib. iii. c. 1.

^g Lib. iii. Epist. 176. ad Isid. Diac.

^h Epist. ad Cor. s. 5.

ⁱ 2 Cor. xi. 23. et seq.

^k Chrysost. Hom. xxv. s. 3. in 2 ad Cor. vol. x. p. 617.

fully to have enlarged himself, he might have filled hundreds of martyrologies with his sufferings. A thousand times was his life at stake ; in every suffering he was a martyr ; and what fell but in parcels upon others, came all upon him ; while they skirmished only with single parties, he had the whole army of sufferings to contend with. All which he generously underwent, with a soul as calm and serene as the morning sun ; no spite or rage, no fury or storms, could ruffle and discompose his spirit : nay, those sufferings which would have broken the back of an ordinary patience, did but make him rise up with greater eagerness and resolution for the doing of his duty.

VII. His patience will yet farther appear from the consideration of another, the last of those virtues we shall take notice of in him, his constancy and fidelity in the discharge of his place, and in the profession of religion. Could the powers and policies of men and devils, spite and oppositions, torments and threatenings, have been able to baffle him out of that religion wherein he had engaged himself, he must have sunk under them, and left his station : but his soul was steeled with a courage and resolution that was impenetrable, and which no temptation, either from hopes or fears, could make any more impression upon, than an arrow can that is shot against a wall of marble. He wanted not solicitation on either hand, both from Jews and Gentiles, and questionless might, in some degree, have made his own terms, would he have been false to his trust, and have quitted that way that was then everywhere spoken against. But, alas ! these things weighed little with our apostle, who “ counted not his life to be dear unto him, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus :” and therefore, when under the sentence of death in his own apprehensions, could triumphingly say, “ I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith :” and so indeed he did ; kept it inviolably, undauntedly, to the last minute of his life. The sum is, he was a man in whom the divine life did eminently manifest and display itself ; he lived piously and devoutly, soberly and temperately, justly and righteously ; careful “ alway to keep a conscience void of offence both towards God and man.” This, he tells us, was his support under suffering ; this the foundation of his confidence towards God, and his firm hopes of happiness in another world : “ this is our rejoicing, the

testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity we have had our conversation in the world."¹

VIII. It is not the least instance of his care and fidelity in his office, that he did not only preach and plant Christianity in all places whither he came, but what he could not personally do, he supplied by writing. Fourteen epistles he left upon record, by which he was not only instrumental in propagating Christian religion at first, but has been useful to the world ever since in all ages of the church. We have all along, in the history of his life, taken particular notice of them in their due place and order; we shall here only make some general observations and remarks upon them, and that as to the style and way wherein they are written, their order, and the subscriptions that are added to them. For the apostle's style and manner of writing, it is plain and simple; and though not set off with the elaborate artifices, and affected additional of human eloquence, yet grave and majestic; and that by the confession of his very enemies: "his letters (say they) are weighty and powerful."^m Nor are there wanting in them some strains of rhetoric, which sufficiently testify his ability that way, had he made it any part of his study and design. Indeed, Jerome is sometimes too rude and bold in his censures of St. Paul's style and character." He tells us, that being an Hebrew of the Hebrews, and admirably skilled in the language of his nation, he was greatly defective in the Greek tongue, (though a late great critic is of another mind,² affirming him to have been as well or better skilled in Greek, than in Hebrew or in Syriac,) wherein he could not sufficiently express his conceptions in a way becoming the majesty of his sense and the matter he delivered, nor transmit the elegancy of his native tongue into another language: that hence he became obscure and intricate in his expressions, guilty many times of solecisms, and scarce tolerable syntax; and that therefore it was not his humility, but the truth of the thing, that made him say, that "he came not with the excellency of speech, but in the power of God." A censure from any other than St. Jerome that would have been justly wondered at: but we know the liberty that he takes to censure any, though the reverence due to so

¹ 2 Cor. i. 12.

^m 2 Cor. x. 10.

ⁿ Ad Algas. Quæst. 11. Quæst. 11. ad Hedib. In Eph. iii. Com. in Gal. iii.

^o Salmas. de Hellenist. par. i. quæst. 6.

great an apostle might, one would think, have challenged a more modest censure at his hands. However, elsewhere he cries him up as a great master of composition:^p that as oft as he heard him, he seemed to hear not words, but thunder; that in all his citations he made use of the most prudent artifices, using simple words, and which seemed to carry nothing but plainness along with them, but which way soever a man turned, breathed force and thunder: he seems entangled in his cause, but catches all that comes near him; turns his back, as if intending to fly, when it is only that he may overcome.

IX. St. Peter long since observed,^q that in Paul's epistles there were *δυσνόητά τινα*, "some things hard to be understood:" which surely is not altogether owing to the profoundness of his sense and the mysteriousness of the subject that he treats of, but in some degree to his manner of expression; his frequent Hebraisms, (common to him with all the holy writers of the New Testament,) his peculiar forms and ways of speech, his often inserting Jewish opinions, and yet but tacitly touching them, his using some words in a new and uncommon sense; but, above all, his frequent and abrupt transitions, suddenly starting aside from one thing to another, whereby his reader is left at a loss, not knowing which way to follow him, not a little contributing to the perplexed obscurity of his discourses. Irenæus took notice of old,^r that St. Paul makes frequent use of these *hyperbata*, by reason of the swiftness of his arguings, and the great fervour and impetus that was in him; leaving many times the designed frame and texture of his discourse, not bringing in what should have immediately connected the sense and order, till some distance after: which indeed, to men of a more nice and delicate temper, and who will not give themselves leave patiently to trace out his reasonings, must needs create some obscurity. Origen and St. Jerome sometimes observe, that besides this, he uses many of his native phrases of the Cilician dialect; which being in a great measure foreign and exotic to the ordinary Greek, introduces a kind of strangeness into his discourse, and renders it less intelligible. Epiphanius tells us,^s that by these methods he acted like a skilful archer, hitting the mark before his adversaries

^p Epist. xxx. pro libb. adv. Jovin. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 236.

^q 2 Pet. iii. 16.

^r Adv. Hær. l. iii. c. 7. p. 248.

^s Hæres. lxiv. c. 29.

were aware of it; by words misplaced, making the frame of his discourse seem obscure and entangled, while in itself it was not only most true, but elaborate, and not difficult to be understood; that to careless and trifling readers it might sometimes seem dissonant and incoherent, but to them that are diligent, and will take their reason along with them, it would appear full of truth, and to be disposed with great care and order.

X. As for the order of these epistles, we have already given a particular account of the times when, and the places whence they were written. That which is here considerable, is the order according to which they are disposed in the sacred canon. Certain it is that they are not placed according to the just order of time wherein they were written; the two epistles to the Thessalonians being on all hands agreed to have been first written, though set almost last in order. Most probable, therefore, it is, that they were placed according to the dignity of those to whom they were sent: the reason why those to whole churches have the precedency of those to particular persons, and among those to churches that to the Romans had the first place and rank assigned to it, was because of the majesty of the imperial city, and the eminency and honourable respect which that church derived thence; and whether the same reason do not hold in others, though I will not positively assert, yet I think none will over-confidently deny. The last inquiry concerns the subscriptions added to the end of these epistles; which, were they authentic, would determine some doubts concerning the time and place of their writing. But, alas, they are of no just value and authority, not the same in all copies; different in the Syriac and Arabic versions, nay, wholly wanting in some ancient Greek copies of the New Testament, and were doubtless at first added at best upon probable conjectures. When at any time they truly represent the place whence, or the person by whom the epistle was sent, it is not that they are to be relied upon in it, but because the thing is either intimated or expressed in the body of the epistle. I shall add no more but this observation, that St. Paul was wont to subscribe every epistle with his own hand,^t "which is my token in every epistle; so I write:" which was done (says one of the ancients^u) to prevent impostures, that his epistles might not be interpolated and cor-

^t 2 Thess. iii. 17.

^u Ambr. in loc.

rupted; and that if any vented epistles under his name, the cheat might be discovered by the apostle's own hand not being to them: and this brings me to the last consideration, that shall conclude this chapter.

XI. That there were some, even in the most early ages of Christianity, who took upon them (for what ends I stand not now to inquire) to write books, and publish them under the name of some apostle, is notoriously known to any, though but never so little conversant in church antiquities. Herein St. Paul had his part and share; several supposititious writings being fathered and thrust upon him. We find a gospel ascribed by some of the ancients to him, which surely arose from no other cause, than that in some of his epistles he makes mention of my gospel: which, as St. Jerome observes,^u can be meant of no other than the gospel of St. Luke, his constant attendant, and from whom he chiefly derived his intelligence. If he wrote another epistle to the Corinthians, precedent to those two extant at this day, as he seems to imply in a passage in his first epistle,^x "I have wrote unto you in an epistle, not to keep company," &c. a passage not conveniently applicable to any other part either in that or the other epistle, nay, a verse or two after, the first epistle is directly opposed to it:^y all that can be said in the case is, that it long since perished, the Divine Providence not seeing it necessary to be preserved for the service of the church. Frequent mention there is also of an epistle of his to the Laodiceans, grounded upon a mistaken passage in the epistle to the Colossians:^z but besides that the apostle does not there speak of an epistle written to the Laodiceans, but of one from them, Tertullian tells us,^a that by the epistle to the Laodiceans is meant that to the Ephesians, and that Marcion the heretic was the first that changed the title; and therefore, in his enumeration of St. Paul's epistles, he omits that to the Ephesians, for no other reason, doubtless, but that according to Marcion's opinion he had reckoned it up under the title of that to the Laodiceans: which yet is more clear, if we consider that Epiphanius, citing a place quoted by Marcion out of the epistle to the Laodiceans,^b it is in the very same words found in that to the Ephesians at this day.

^u De Script. Eccl. in Luc.

^x 1 Cor. v. 11.

^a Adv. Marc. l. v. c. 11. *ibid.* c. 17.

^x 1 Cor. v. 9.

^z Col. iv. 16.

^b Hæres. xlii. p. 319.

However, such an epistle is still extant, forged no doubt before St. Jerome's time; who tells us,^c that it was read by some, but yet exploded and rejected by all. Besides these, there was his Revelation,^d called also *'Αναβατικὸν*, or his "ascension;" grounded on his ecstasy or rapture into heaven, first forged by the Cainian heretics, and in great use and estimation among the Gnostics. Sozomen tells us,^e that this apocalypse was owned by none of the ancients, though much commended by some monks in his time: and he farther adds, that in the time of the emperor Theodosius, it was said to have been found in an underground chest of marble in St. Paul's house at Tarsus, and that by a particular revelation: a story which upon inquiry he found to be as false, as the book itself was forged and spurious. The Acts of St. Paul are mentioned both by Origen^f and Eusebius,^g but not as writings of approved and unquestionable credit and authority. The epistles that are said to have passed between St. Paul and Seneca, how early soever they started in the church, yet the falsehood and fabulousness of them is now too notoriously known, to need any farther account or description of them.

SECTION IX.

THE PRINCIPAL CONTROVERSIES THAT EXERCISED THE CHURCH IN HIS TIME.

Simon Magus, the father of heretics. The wretched principles and practices of him and his followers. Their asserting angel-worship; and how countermined by St. Paul. Their holding it lawful to sacrifice to idols, and abjure the faith in times of persecution, discovered and opposed by St. Paul. Their maintaining an universal licence to sin. Their manners and opinions herein described by St. Paul in his epistles. The great controversy of those times about the obligation of the law of Moses upon the Gentile converts. The original of it, whence. The mighty veneration which the Jews had for the law of Moses. The true state of the controversy, what. The determination made in it by the apostolic synod at Jerusalem. Meats offered to idols, what. Abstinence from blood, why enjoined of old. Things strangled, why forbidden. Fornication commonly practised and accounted lawful among the Gentiles. The hire of the harlot, what. How dedicated to their deities among the heathens. The main passages in St. Paul's epistles concerning justification and salvation shewed to have respect to this controversy. What meant by law, and what by faith, in St. Paul's epistles. The

^c De Script. Eccl. in Paulo.

^d Epiph. Hæres. xxxviii. c. 2. August. in Joan. Tract. xcvi. s. 8. vol. iii. par. ii. p. 743.

^e Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 19.

^f Orig. *περ. 'Αρχ.* l. i. c. 2.

^g Euseb. l. iii. c. 3.

persons whom he had to deal with in this controversy, who. The Jews' strange doting upon circumcision. The way and manner of the apostle's reasoning in this controversy considered. His chief arguments shewed immediately to respect the case of the Jewish and Gentile converts. No other controversy in those times which his discourses could refer to. Two consecutaries from this discourse. I. That works of evangelical obedience are not opposed to faith in justification. What meant by works of evangelical obedience. This method of justification excludes boasting, and entirely gives the glory to God. II. That the doctrines of St. Paul and St. James about justification are fairly consistent with each other. These two apostles shewed to pursue the same design. St. James's excellent reasonings to that purpose.

THOUGH our Lord and his apostles delivered the Christian religion, especially as to the main and essential parts of it, in words as plain as words could express it, yet were there men of perverse and "corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith," who, from different causes, some ignorantly or wilfully mistaking the doctrines of Christianity, others to serve ill purposes and designs, began to introduce errors and unsound opinions into the church, and to debauch the minds of men from the simplicity of the gospel, hereby disquieting the thoughts and alienating the affections of men, and disturbing the peace and order of the church. The first ringleader of this heretical crew was Simon Magus, who not being able to attain his ends of the apostles, by getting a power to confer miraculous gifts, whereby he designed to greaten and enrich himself, resolved to be revenged of them; scattering the most poisonous tares among the good wheat that they had sown, bringing in the most pernicious principles, and, as the natural consequent of that, patronizing the most debauched villanous practices, and this under a pretence of still being Christians. To enumerate the several dogmata and damnable heresies, first broached by Simon, and then vented and propagated by his disciples and followers, who, though passing under different titles, yet all centred at last in the name of Gnostics, (a term which we shall sometimes use for conveniency, though it took not place till after St. Paul's time,) were as needless as it is alien to my purpose. I shall only take notice of a few of more signal remark, and such as St. Paul in his epistles does eminently reflect upon.

II. Amongst the opinions and principles of Simon and his followers, this was one:^b that God did not create the world;

^b Iren. l. i. c. 20. Epiph. Hær. xxi. Tert. de Præscr. Hæret. c. 33. et c. 46. Aug. de Hæres. Hær. xxxix.

that it was made by angels; that divine honours were due to them, and they to be adored as subordinate mediators between God and us. This our apostle saw growing up apace, and struck betimes at the root, in that early caution he gave to the Colossians, to "let no man beguile them in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels; intruding into those things which he hath not seen; vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind; and not holding the head;"ⁱ i. e. hereby disclaiming Christ, the head of the church. But notwithstanding this warning, this error still continued, and spread itself in those parts for several ages, till expressly condemned by the Laodicean council.^j Nay, Theodoret tells us,^k that in his time there were still oratories erected to the archangel Michael in those places, wherein they were wont to meet and pray to angels. Another Gnostic principle was, that men might freely and indifferently eat what had been offered in sacrifice to idols;^l yea, sacrifice to the idol itself, it being lawful confidently to abjure the faith in time of persecution. The first part whereof St. Paul does largely and frequently discuss up and down his epistles: the latter, wherein the sting and poison was more immediately couched, was craftily adapted to those times of suffering, and greedily swallowed by many, hereby drawn into apostacy. Against this our apostle antidotes the Christians, especially the Jewish converts, among whom the Gnostics had mixed themselves, that they would not suffer themselves to be drawn aside by "an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God;"^m that, notwithstanding sufferings and persecutions, they would "hold fast the profession of the faith without wavering; not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is," (the Gnostic heretics,) remembering how severely God has threatened apostates, that "if any man draw back, his soul shall have no pleasure in him;" and "what a fearful thing it is, thus to fall into the hands of the living God."ⁿ

III. But besides this, Simon and his followers made the gate yet wider, maintaining an universal license to sin, that men were free to do whatever they had a mind to;^o that to press the observance of good works was a bondage inconsistent with the liberty of the gospel; that so men did but believe in him, and

ⁱ Col. ii. 18.^j Can. xxxv.^k Theod. comment. in Col. ii.^l Orig. adv. Cels. l. vi. s. 11. Euseb. l. iv. c. 7.^m Heb. iii. 12.ⁿ Heb. x. 23. 25. 31. 38.^o Iren. adv. Hær. l. i. c. 20.

his dear Helen, they had no reason to regard law or prophets, but might do what they pleased; they should be saved by his grace, and not according to good works. Irenæus adds, (what a man might easily have inferred, had he never been told it,) that they lived in all lust and filthiness; as, indeed, whoever will take the pains to peruse the account that is given of them, will find that they wallowed in the most horrible and unheard-of bestialities. These persons St. Paul does as particularly describe as if he had named them, having once and again, with tears, warned the Philippians of them,^p that they “were enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.” And elsewhere, to the same effect,^q that they would “mark them that caused divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which they had learned, and avoid them: for they that were such, served not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; by good words and fair speeches deceiving the hearts of the simple.” This, I doubt not, he had in his eye, when he gave those caveats to the Ephesians,^r that “fornication, and all uncleanness, and inordinate desires, should not be once named amongst them, as became saints; nor filthiness, nor unclean talking:” being assured by the Christian doctrine, that “no whoremonger, nor unclean person,” &c. could be saved: that therefore “they should let no man deceive them with vain words; these being the very things for which the wrath of God came upon the children of disobedience,” and, accordingly, it became them “not to be partakers with them:” plainly intimating that this impure Gnostic crew (whose doctrines and practices he does here no less truly than lively represent) had begun, by crafty and insinuating arts, to screw itself into the church of Ephesus, cheating the people with subtle and flattering insinuations, probably persuading them that these things were but indifferent, and a part of that Christian liberty wherein the gospel had instated them. By these and such like principles and practices (many whereof might be reckoned up) they corrupted the faith of Christians, distracted the peace of the church, stained and defiled the honour and purity of the best religion in the world.

IV. But the greatest and most famous controversy that of all others, in those times, exercised the Christian church, was con-

^p Phil. iii. 17, 18.

^q Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

^r Eph. v. 3, 4, etc.

cerning the obligation that Christians were under to observe the law of Moses, as necessary to their justification and salvation : which because a matter of so much importance, and which takes up so great a part of St. Paul's epistles, and the clearing whereof will reflect a great light upon them, we shall consider more at large. In order whereunto, three things especially are to be inquired after : the true state of the controversy ; what the apostles determined in this matter ; and what respect the most material passages in St. Paul's epistles about justification and salvation bear to this controversy. First we shall inquire into the true state and nature of the controversy ; and for this we are to know, that when Christianity was published to the world, it mainly prevailed among the Jews, they being generally the first converts to the faith. But having been brought up in a mighty reverence and veneration for the Mosaic institutions, and looking upon that economy as immediately contrived by God himself, delivered by angels, settled by their great master Moses, received with the most solemn and sensible appearances of divine power and majesty, ratified by miracles, and entertained by all their forefathers as the peculiar prerogative of that nation for so many ages and generations, they could not easily be brought off from it, or behold the gospel but with an evil eye, as an enemy that came to supplant and undermine this ancient and excellent institution. Nay, those of them that were prevailed upon, by the convictive power and evidence of the gospel, to embrace the Christian religion, yet could not get over the prejudice of education, but must still continue their observance of those legal rites and customs wherein they had been brought up : and, not content with this, they began magisterially to impose them upon others, even all the Gentile converts, as that without which they could never be accepted by God in this, or rewarded by him in another world. This controversy was first started at Antioch, a place not more remarkable for its own greatness, than the vast numbers of Jews that dwelt there, enjoying great immunities, granted them by the king of Syria :^{*} for after that Antiochus Epiphanes had destroyed Jerusalem, and laid waste the temple, the Jews generally flocked hither, where they were courteously entertained by his successors, the spoils of the temple restored to them for the enriching and adorning of their synagogue, and

^{*} Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. vii. c. 21.

they made equally with the Greeks freemen of that city: by which means their numbers increased daily, partly by the resort of others from Judea, partly by a numerous conversion of proselytes, whom they gained over to their religion. Accordingly, Christianity, at its first setting out, found a very successful entertainment in this place. And hither it was that some of the Jewish converts being come down from Jerusalem, taught the Christians,¹ that unless they observed circumcision, and the whole law of Moses, they could not be saved. Paul and Barnabas, then at Antioch, observing the ill influence that this had upon the minds of men, (disturbing many at present, and causing the apostacy of some afterwards,) began vigorously to oppose this growing error; but not able to conjure down this spirit that had been raised up, they were despatched by the church at Antioch to consult the apostles and governors at Jerusalem about this matter: whither being come, they found the quarrel espoused among others by some converts of the sect of the Pharisees, (of all others the most zealous assertors of the Mosaic rites,) stiffly maintaining, that besides the gospel, or the Christian religion, it was necessary for all converts, whether Jews or Gentiles, to keep to circumcision, and the law of Moses. So that the state of the controversy between the orthodox and these Judaizing Christians was plainly this, "Whether circumcision and the observation of the Mosaic law, or only the belief and practice of Christianity, be necessary to salvation?" The latter part of the question was maintained by the apostles, the former asserted by the Judaizing zealots, making the law of Moses equally necessary with the law of Christ: and no doubt pretending, that whatever these men might preach at Antioch, yet the apostles were of another mind; whose sentence and resolution it was therefore thought necessary should be immediately known.

XV. We are then next to consider what determination the apostolic synod at Jerusalem made of this matter. For a council of the apostles and rulers being immediately convened, and the question by Paul and Barnabas brought before them, the case was canvassed and debated on all hands: and at last it was resolved upon, by their unanimous sentence and suffrage, that the Gentile converts were under no obligation to the Jewish law; that God had abundantly declared his acceptance of them, though

¹ Acts xv. 1.

strangers to the Mosaical economy ; that they were sufficiently secured of their happiness and salvation by the grace of the gospel, wherein they might be justified and saved without circumcision or legal ceremonies, a yoke from which Christ had now set us free. But because the apostles did not think it prudent, in these circumstances, too much to stir the exasperated humour of the Jews, (lest by straining the string too high at first, they should endanger their revolting from the faith,) therefore they thought of some indulgence in the case ; St. James, then bishop of Jerusalem, and probably president of the council, propounding this expedient : that for the present the Gentile converts should so far only comply with the humour of the Jews, as to “ abstain from meats offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from fornication.” Let us a little more distinctly survey the ingredients of this imposition. ‘ “ Meats offered to idols,” or, as St. James in his discourse styles them, ἀλισγήματα τῶν εἰδόλων, “ the pollution of idols ;” the word ἀλισγήματα properly denoting, the meats that were polluted by being consecrated to the idol. Thus we read of ἄρτος ἐπιθῆς, ἄρτος ἡλισσημένος, (as the Seventy render it,) “ polluted bread upon God’s altar,” i. e. such probably as had been before offered to idols. So that these meats offered to the idols were parts of those sacrifices which the heathens offered to their gods, of the remaining portions whereof they usually made a feast in the idol-temple, inviting their friends thither, and sometimes their Christian friends to come along with them. This, God had particularly forbidden the Jews by the law of Moses, “ thou shalt worship no other God : lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice.” And the not observing this prohibition cost the Jews dear : when invited by the Moabites to the sacrifices of their gods,* “ they did eat with them, and bowed down to their gods.” Sometimes these remaining portions were sold for common use in the shambles, and bought by Christians. Both which gave great offence to the zealous Jews, who looked upon it as a participation in the idolatries of the heathen : of both which our apostle discourses elsewhere at large, pressing Christians to “ abstain from idolatry,” both as to the idol-feasts, and the remainders of the sacrifice :

* Exod. xxxiv. 14, 15.

* Numb. xxv. 2—4.

from the former, as more immediately unlawful; from the latter, the sacrificial meats sold in the shambles, as giving offence to weak and undiscerning Christians. For though in itself "an idol was nothing in the world," and consequently no honour could be done it by eating what was offered to it, yet was it more prudent and reasonable to abstain, partly because flesh-meats have no peculiar excellency in them to commend us to God; partly because all men were not alike instructed in the knowledge of their liberty, their minds easily puzzled, and their consciences entangled, the Gentiles by this means hardened in their idolatrous practices, weak brethren offended; besides, though these things were in their own nature indifferent, and in a man's own power to do, or to let alone, yet was it not convenient to make our liberty a snare to others, and to venture upon what was lawful, when it was plainly unedifying and inexpedient. "From blood:" this God forbade of old, and that sometime before the giving of the law by Moses,^y that "they should not eat the flesh with the blood, which was the life thereof." The mystery of which prohibition was to instruct men in the duties of mercy and tenderness even to brute beasts, but (as appears from what follows after) primarily designed by God as a solemn fence and bar against murder, and the effusion of human blood: a law afterwards renewed upon the Jews, and inserted into the body of the Mosaic precepts. "From things strangled:" that is, that they should abstain from eating of those beasts that died without letting blood, where the blood was not thoroughly drained from them; a prohibition grounded upon the reason of the former, and indeed was greatly abominable to the Jews, being so expressly forbidden in their law.^z But it was not more offensive to the Jews than acceptable to the Gentiles,^a who were wont with great art and care to strangle living creatures, that they might stew or dress them with their blood in them, as a point of curious and exquisite delicacy. This and the foregoing prohibition, abstinence from blood, died not with the apostles, nor were buried with other Jewish rites, but were inviolably observed for several ages in the Christian church, as we have elsewhere observed from the writers of those times.^b

^y Gen. ix. 4.

^z Levit. xvii. 10, 11, 12, etc.

^a Athen. Deipnos. l. ii. c. 24. ubi vid. Casaub. in loc.

^b Prim. Christ. par. iii. c. 1.

Lastly, "From fornication:" this was a thing commonly practised in the heathen world, who generally beheld simple fornication as no sin,^c and that it was lawful for persons, not engaged in wedlock, to make use of women that exposed themselves. A custom justly offensive to the Jews, and therefore, to cure two evils at once, the apostles here solemnly declare against it. Not that they thought it a thing indifferent, as the rest of the prohibited rites were, for it is forbidden by the natural law, (as contrary to that chasteness and modesty, that order and comeliness, which God has planted in the minds of men,) but they joined it in the same class with them, because the Gentiles looked upon it as a thing lawful and indifferent. It had been expressly forbidden by the Mosaic law,^d "there shall be no whore of the daughters of Israel;" and because the heathens had generally thrown down this fence and bar set by the law of nature, it was here again repaired by the first planters of Christianity, as by St. Paul elsewhere,^e "Ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus; for this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God." Though, after all, I must confess myself inclinable to embrace Heinsius's ingenious conjecture, that by *πορνεία*, "fornication," we are here to understand *πόρνῃς μίσθωμα*, "the harlot's hire," or the *πορνικὴ θυσία*, "the offering which those persons were wont to make." For among the Gentiles, nothing was more usual than for the common women, that prostituted themselves to lewd embraces, (those especially that attended at the temples of Venus,) to dedicate some part of their gain, and present it to the gods. Athanasius has a passage very express to this purpose:^f *Γυναῖκες γοῦν ἐν εἰδωλείοις τῆς Φοινίκης πάλαι προεκαθέζοντο, ἀπαρχόμεναι τοῖς ἐκεῖ θεοῖς ἑαυτῶν τὴν τοῦ σώματος μισθαρνίαν, νομίζουσαι τῇ πορνείᾳ τὴν θεὸν ἑαυτῶν ἱλάσκεσθαι, καὶ εἰς εὐμένειαν ἄγειν αὐτὴν διὰ τούτων*: "The women of old were wont to sit in the idol temples of Phœnicia, and to dedicate the gain which they got by the prostitution of

^c Vid. Cicer. pro Coelio, Orat. xxxiv. Terent. Adelph. act. i. sc. 2. Philem. Comic. in Delph. ap. Athen. l. xiii. c. 3. Vid. Leg. Attic. l. vi. tit. v. p. 41. et Petit. Comm. p. 474.

^d Deut. xxiii. 17.

^e 1 Thess. iv. 2—5.

^f Orat. adv. Gent. s. 26.

their bodies, as a kind of first-fruits to the deities of the place ; supposing that by fornication they should pacify their goddess, and by this means render her favourable and propitious to them." Where it is plain he uses *πορνεία*, or "fornication," in this very sense, for that gain or reward of it which they consecrated to their gods. Some such thing Solomon had in his eye,^g when he brings in the harlot thus courting the young man, "I have peace-offerings with me, this day have I paid my vows." These presents were either made in specie, the very money thus unrighteously gotten, or in sacrifices bought with it, and offered at the temple, the remainders whereof were taken and sold among the ordinary sacrificial portions. This as it holds the nearest correspondence with the rest of the rites here forbidden, so could it not choose but be a mighty scandal to the Jews, it being so particularly prohibited in their law,^h "Thou shalt not bring the hire of an whore into the house of the Lord thy God for any vow, for it is an abomination to the Lord."

VI. These prohibitions, here laid upon the Gentiles, were by the apostles intended only for a temporary compliance with the Jewish converts, till they could by degrees be brought off from their stiffness and obstinacy, and then the reason of the thing ceasing, the obligation to it must needs cease and fail. Nay, we may observe, that even while the apostolical decree lasted in its greatest force and power, in those places where there were few or no Jewish converts, the apostle did not stick to give leave, that, except in case of scandal, any kind of meats, even the portions of the idol-sacrifices, might be indifferently bought and taken by Christians as well as Heathens. These were all which, in order to the satisfaction of the Jews, and for the present peace of the church, the apostles thought necessary to require of the converted Gentiles, but that for all the rest they were perfectly free from legal observances, obliged only to the commands of Christianity. So that the apostolical decision that was made of this matter was this: "that (besides the temporary observation of those few indifferent rites before mentioned) the belief and practice of the Christian religion was perfectly sufficient to salvation, without circumcision, and the observation of the Mosaic law." This synodical determination allayed the controversy for a while, being joyfully received by the Gentile Christians. But, alas! the

^g Prov. vii. 14.

^h Deut. xxiii. 18.

Jewish zeal began again to ferment and spread itself; they could not with any patience endure to see their beloved Moses deserted, and those venerable institutions trodden down, and therefore laboured to keep up their credit, and still to assert them as necessary to salvation: than which nothing created St. Paul greater trouble at every turn, being forced to contend against these Judaizing teachers almost in every church where he came; as appears by that great part that they bear in all his epistles, especially that to the Romans, and Galatians, where this leaven had most diffused itself: whom the better to undeceive, he discourses at large of the nature and institution, the end and design, the antiquating and abolishing of that Mosaic covenant, which these men laid so much stress and weight upon.

VII. Hence then we pass to the third thing considerable for the clearing of this matter, which is to shew, that the main passages in St. Paul's epistles, concerning justification and salvation, have an immediate reference to this controversy. But before we enter upon that, something must necessarily be premised for the explicating some terms and phrases frequently used by our apostle in this question; these two especially, what he means by law, and what by faith. By law, then, it is plain, he usually understands the Jewish law, which was a complex body of laws, containing moral, ceremonial, and judicial precepts, each of which had its use and office as a great instrument of duty. The judicial laws, being peculiar statutes accommodated to the state of the Jews' commonwealth, as all civil constitutions, restrained men from the external acts of sin: the ceremonial laws came somewhat nearer, and besides their typical relation to the evangelical state, by external and symbolical representations signified and exhibited that spiritual impurity from which men were to abstain: the moral laws, founded in the natural notions of men's minds concerning good and evil, directly urged men to duty, and prohibited their prevarications. These three made up the entire code and pandects of the Jewish statutes; all which our apostle comprehends under the general notion of "the law," and not the moral law singly and separately considered, in which sense it never appears that the Jews expected justification and salvation by it, nay, rather, that they looked for it merely from the observance of the ritual and ceremonial law: so that the moral law is no farther considered by him in this question, than

as it made up a part of the Mosaical constitution, of that national and political covenant which God made with the Jews at Mount Sinai. Hence the apostle all along in his discourses constantly opposes the law and the gospel, and the observation of the one to the belief and practice of the other; which surely he would not have done, had he simply intended the moral law, it being more expressly incorporated into the gospel than ever it was into the law of Moses. And that the apostle does thus oppose the law and gospel, might be made evident from the continued series of his discourses; but a few places shall suffice: "By what law (says the apostle) is boasting excluded?ⁱ by the law of works?" i. e. by the Mosaic law, in whose peculiar privileges and prerogatives the Jews did strangely flatter and pride themselves? "Nay, but by the law of faith:" i. e. by the gospel, or the evangelical way of God's dealing with us. And elsewhere,^k giving an account of this very controversy between the Jewish and Gentile converts, he first opposes their persons, "Jews by nature," and "sinners of the Gentiles," and then infers, "that a man is not justified by the works of the law," by those legal observances, whereby the Jews expected to be justified, "but by the faith of Christ," by a hearty belief of, and compliance with that way which Christ has introduced; "for by the works of the law," by legal obedience, "no flesh," neither Jew nor Gentile, "shall" now "be justified." "Fain would I learn, whether you received the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"^l that is, whether you became partakers of the miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost, while you continued under the legal dispensation, or since you embraced the gospel and the faith of Christ: and speaking afterwards of the state of the Jews before the revelation of the gospel, says he,^m "before faith came, we were kept under the law;" i. e. before the gospel came, we were kept under the discipline of the legal economy, "shut up unto the faith," reserved for the discovery of the evangelical dispensation, "which should afterwards [in its due time] be revealed" to the world. This in the following chapter he discourses more at large:ⁿ "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law," i. e. ye Jews that so fondly dote upon the legal state, "Do ye not hear the law," i. e. understand what your own law

ⁱ Rom. iii. 27.^k Gal. ii. 15, 16.^l Gal. iii. 2—5.^m Gal. iii. 23.ⁿ Gal. iv. 21, et seq.

does so clearly intimate? and then goes on to unriddle what was wrapt up in the famous allegory of Abraham's two sons by his two wives: the one, Ishmael, born of Hagar, the bond-woman, who denoted the Jewish covenant made at Mount Sinai, which, according to the representation of her condition, was a servile state; the other, Isaac, born of Sarah, the free-woman, was the son of the promise, denoting "Jerusalem that is above, and is free, the mother of us all:" i. e. the state and covenant of the gospel, whereby all Christians, as the spiritual children of Abraham, are set free from the bondage of the Mosaic dispensation. By all which it is evident, that by law and the works of the law, in this controversy, the apostle understands the law of Moses, and that obedience which the legal dispensation required at their hands.

VIII. We are secondly to inquire, what the apostle means by faith; and he commonly uses it two ways. 1. More generally for the gospel, or that evangelical way of justification and salvation which Christ has brought in, in opposition to circumcision, and the observation of those rites by which the Jews expected to be justified: and this is plain from the preceding opposition, where faith, as denoting the gospel, is frequently opposed to the law of Moses. 2. Faith is taken more particularly for a practical belief, or such an assent to the evangelical revelation as produces a sincere obedience to the laws of it; and, indeed, as concerned in this matter, is usually taken not for this or that single virtue, but for the entire condition of the new covenant, as comprehending all that duty that it requires of us: than which nothing can be more plain and evident; "in Christ Jesus," i. e. under the gospel, "neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision;" it is all one to justification whether a man be circumcised or no; what then? "but faith, which worketh by love:"^o which afterwards he explains thus; "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature,"^p a renewed and divine temper of mind, and a new course and state of life. And lest all this should not be thought plain enough, he elsewhere tells us,^q that "circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping the commandments of God." From which places there needs no skill to infer, that that faith whereby we are justified contains

^o Gal. v. 6.^p Gal. vi. 15.^q 1 Cor. vii. 19.

in it a new disposition and state both of heart and life, and an observation of the laws of Christ ; in which respect the apostle does in the very same verse expound "believing," by "obeying of the gospel."^r Such, he assures us, was that very faith by which Abraham was justified, who against all probabilities of reason believed in God's promise ; "he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong," &c. : that is, he so firmly believed what God had promised, that he gave him the glory of his truth and faithfulness, his infinite power and ability to do all things. And how did he that ? by acting suitably in a way of entire resignation, and sincere obedience to the divine will and pleasure : so the apostle elsewhere more expressly,^s "by faith he obeyed, and went out, not knowing whither he went." This faith (he tells us) "was imputed to Abraham for righteousness ;" that is, God, by virtue of the new covenant made in Christ, was graciously pleased to look upon this obedience (though in itself imperfect) as that for which he accounted him, and would deal with him as a just and a righteous man. And upon this account we find Abraham's faith opposed to a perfect and unsinning obedience, for thus the apostle tells us,^t that Abraham was justified by faith, in opposition to his being justified by such an absolute and complete obedience, as might have enabled him to challenge the reward by the strict laws of justice : whereas now his being pardoned and accepted by God in the way of a mean and imperfect obedience, it could not claim impunity, much less a reward, but must be entirely owing to the divine grace and favour.

IX. Having thus cleared our way, by restoring these words to their genuine and native sense, we come to shew, how the apostle in his discourses does all along refer to the original controversy between the Jewish and Gentile converts, whether justification was by the observation of the Mosaic law, or by the belief and practice of the gospel ; and this will appear, if we consider the persons that he has to deal with, the way and manner of his arguing, and that there was then no other controversy on foot to which these passages could refer. The persons whom he had to deal with were chiefly of two sorts, pure Jews, and Jewish converts. Pure Jews were those that kept themselves wholly to the legal economy, and expected to be justified and saved in no

^r Rom. x. 16.^s Heb. xi. 8.^t Rom. iv. 22.^u Rom. iv. 2, 3, &c.

other way, than the observation of the law of Moses. Indeed, they laid a more peculiar stress upon circumcision, because this having been added as the seal of that covenant which God made with Abraham, and the discriminating badge whereby they were to be distinguished from all other nations, they looked upon it as having a special efficacy in it to recommend them to the divine acceptance. Accordingly, we find in their writings that they make this the main basis and foundation of their hope and confidence towards God. For they tell us, that the precept of circumcision is greater than all the rest, and equivalent to the whole law; that the reason why God hears the prayers of the Israelites, but not הגוים, "of the Gentiles" or Christians, is המילת בוכרת, "for the virtue and merit of circumcision;" yea, that "so great is the power and efficacy of the law of circumcision, that no man that is circumcised shall go to hell."^x Nay, according to the idle and trifling humour of these men,^y they fetch down Abraham from the seat of the blessed, and place him as porter at the gates of hell, upon no other errand than to keep circumcised persons from entering into that miserable place. However nothing is more evident, than that circumcision was the fort and sanctuary wherein they ordinarily placed their security: and, accordingly, we find St. Paul frequently disputing against circumcision, as virtually comprising, in their notion, the keeping of the whole Jewish law. Besides, to these literal impositions of the law of Moses, the Pharisees had added many vain traditions and several superstitious usages of their own contrivance, in the observance whereof the people placed not a little confidence, as to that righteousness upon which they hoped to stand clear with heaven. Against all these our apostle argues, and sometimes by arguments peculiar to them alone. Jewish converts were those, who having embraced the Christian religion, did yet, out of a veneration to their ancient rites, make the observance of them equally necessary with the belief and practice of Christianity both to themselves and others. These last were the persons, who as they first started the controversy, so were those against whom the apostle mainly opposed himself, endeavouring to dismount their pretences, and to beat down their opinions level with the ground.

X. This will yet farther appear from the way and manner of the apostle's arguing, which plainly respects this controversy, and

^x Cad. Hakkem. ap. Buxtorf. F. præf. ad Syn. Jud.

^y Synag. Jud. c. 4.

will be best seen in some particular instances of his reasonings. And, first, he argues, that this way of justification, urged by Jews and Jewish converts, was inconsistent with the goodness of God, and his universal kindness to mankind; being so narrow and limited, that it excluded the far greatest part of the world. Thus, in the three first chapters of his epistle to the Romans, having proved at large that the whole world, both Jew and Gentile, were under a state of guilt, and consequently liable to the Divine sentence and condemnation, he comes next to inquire by what means they may be delivered from this state of vengeance, and shews that it could not be but by legal observances;^a but that now there was a way of righteousness or justification declared by Christ in the gospel (intimated also in the Old Testament) extending to all, both Jews and Gentiles, whereby God, with respect to the satisfaction and expiation of Christ, is ready freely to pardon and justify all penitent believers: that therefore there was a way revealed in the gospel, whereby a man might be justified, without being beholden to the rites of the Jewish law, otherwise it would argue that God had very little care of the greatest part of men. "Is he God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith;" Jew and Gentile in the same evangelical way. The force of which argument lies in this: that that cannot be necessary to our justification, which excludes the greatest part of mankind from all possibility of being justified, (and this justification by the Mosaic law plainly does;) a thing by no means consistent with God's universal love and kindness to his creatures. Hence the apostle magnifies the grace of the gospel, that it has broken down the partition-wall, and made way for all nations to come in;^a that "now there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian;" no difference in this respect,^b but "all one in Christ Jesus," all equally admitted to terms of pardon and justification:^c "in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, being accepted with him."

XI. Secondly, he argues, that this Jewish way of justification could not be indispensably necessary, in that it had not been the constant way whereby good men in all ages had been justified and

^a Rom. iii. 20, 21, &c.^a Gal. iii. 28.^b Col. iii. 11.^c Acts x. 35.

accepted with heaven. This he eminently proves from the instance of Abraham, whom the scripture sets forth as the father of the faithful, and the great exemplar of that way, wherein all his spiritual seed, all true believers, were to be justified. Now of him it is evident, that he was justified and accepted with God upon his practical belief of God's power and promise, before ever circumcision, and much more before the rest of the Mosaic institution, was in being. "Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned unto Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned, when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith, which he had, being yet uncircumcised,"^d &c. The meaning whereof is plainly this, that pardon of sin cannot be entailed upon the way of the Mosaic law; it being evident, that Abraham was justified and approved of God before he was circumcised, which was only added as a seal of the covenant between God and him, and a testimony of that acceptance with God which he had obtained before. And this way of God's dealing with Abraham, and in him with all his spiritual children, the legal institution could not make void; it being impossible that that dispensation, which came so long after, should disannul the covenant which God had made with Abraham and his spiritual seed four hundred and thirty years before.^e Upon this account, as the apostle observes, the scripture sets forth Abraham as the great type and pattern of justification, as "the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also; and the father of circumcision, to them who are not of the circumcision only, but also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised."^f "They therefore that are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham: and the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel (this evangelical way of justifying) unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith (who believe and obey, as Abraham did) shall be blessed (pardoned and saved) with faithful Abraham."^g

^d Rom. iv. 9, 10, 11, &c.^e Gal. iii. 17.^f Rom. iv. 11, 12.^g Gal. iii. 7—9.

It might farther be demonstrated, that this has ever been God's method of dealing with mankind; our apostle, in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, proving all along, by particular instances, that it was by such a faith as this, without any relation to the law of Moses, that good men were justified and accepted with God in all ages of the world.

XII. Thirdly, he argues against this Jewish way of justification from the deficiency and imperfection of the Mosaic economy, not able to justify and save sinners. Deficient, as not able to assist those that were under it with sufficient aids to perform what it required of them;^b "this the law could not do, for that it was weak through the flesh, till God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, (to enable us,) that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." And, indeed, "could the law have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law:"ⁱ but, alas! the scripture having concluded all mankind, Jew and Gentile, under sin, and consequently incapable of being justified upon terms of perfect and entire obedience, there is now no other way but this, that "the promise by the faith of Christ be given to all them that believe," i. e. this evangelical method of justifying sincere believers. Besides, the Jewish economy was deficient in pardoning sin, and procuring the grace and favour of God; it could only awaken the knowledge of sin, not remove the guilt of it. "It was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin;"^k all the sacrifices of the Mosaic law were no farther available for the pardon of sin, than merely as they were founded in, and had respect to that great sacrifice and expiation, which was to be made for the sins of mankind by the death of the Son of God. "The priests, though they daily ministered, and oftentimes offered the same sacrifices, yet could they never take away sins:"^l no, that was reserved for a better and a higher sacrifice, even that of our Lord himself, who "after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God;" having completed that which the repeated sacrifices of the law could never effect. So that all men being under guilt, and no justification where there was no remission, the Jewish economy, being in itself unable to pardon, was incapable to justify. This St. Paul else-

^b Rom. viii. 3, 4.ⁱ Gal. iii. 21.^k Heb. x. 4.

Heb. x. 11, 12.

where declared in an open assembly before Jews and Gentiles ; “be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man [Christ Jesus] is preached unto you forgiveness of sins : and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”^m

XIII. Fourthly, he proves, that justification by the Mosaic law could not stand with the death of Christ, the necessity of whose death and sufferings it did plainly evacuate and take away. For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain :ⁿ if the Mosaical performances be still necessary to our justification, then certainly it was to very little purpose, and altogether unbecoming the wisdom and goodness of God, to send his own Son into the world, to do so much for us, and to suffer such exquisite pains and tortures. Nay, he tells them, that while they persisted in this fond obstinate opinion, all that Christ had done and suffered could be of no advantage to them. “Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage,” the bondage and servitude of the Mosaic rites ; “Behold, I Paul solemnly say unto you, that if you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing : for I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law ; Christ is become of none effect to you ; whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace.”^o The sum of which argument is, that whoever lay the stress of their justification upon circumcision, and the observances of the law, do thereby declare themselves to be under an obligation of perfect obedience to all that the law requires of them, and accordingly supersede the virtue and efficacy of Christ’s death, and disclaim all right and title to the grace and favour of the gospel. For since Christ’s death is abundantly sufficient to attain its ends, whoever takes in another, plainly renounces that, and rests upon that of his own choosing. By these ways of reasoning it is evident what the apostle drives at in all his discourses about this matter. More might have been observed, had I not thought, that these are sufficient to render his design, especially to the unprejudiced and impartial, obvious and plain enough.

XIV. Lastly, That St. Paul’s discourses about justification and salvation do immediately refer to the controversy between

^m Acts xiii. 38, 39.

ⁿ Gal. ii. 21.

^o Gal. v. 1—4.

the orthodox and Judaizing Christians, appears hence, that there was no other controversy then on foot, but concerning the way of justification, whether it was by the observation of the law of Moses, or only of the gospel and the law of Christ. For we must needs suppose, that the apostle wrote with a primary respect to the present state of things, and so as they whom he had to deal with might, and could not but understand him: which yet would have been impossible for them to have done, had he intended them for the controversies which have since been bandied with so much zeal and fierceness, and to give countenance to those many nice and subtle propositions, those curious and elaborate schemes, which some men in these later ages have drawn of these matters.

XV. From the whole discourse, two consecutaries especially plainly follow. CONSECT. 1. That works of evangelical obedience are not opposed to faith in justification. By works of evangelical obedience, I mean such Christian duties as are the fruits, not of our own power and strength, but God's Spirit, done by the assistance of his grace. And that these are not opposed to faith, is undeniably evident, in that (as we observed before) faith, as including the new nature, and the keeping God's commands, is made the usual condition of justification. Nor can it be otherwise, when other graces and virtues of the Christian life are made the terms of pardon and acceptance with heaven, and of our title to the merits of Christ's death, and the great promise of eternal life. Thus repentance, which is not so much a single act, as a complex body of Christian duties: "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost;"^p "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out."^q So charity and forgiveness of others: "Forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses: for if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive yours."^r Sometimes evangelical obedience in general: "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him."^s "If we walk in the light,

^p Acts ii. 38.

^r Mark xi. 25, 26. Matt. vi. 14, 15.

^q Acts iii. 19.

^s Acts x. 34, 35.

as God is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.”^t What privilege then has faith above other graces in this matter? are we justified by faith? We are pardoned and accepted with God upon our repentance, charity, and other acts of evangelical obedience. Is faith opposed to the works of the Mosaic law in justification? so are works of evangelical obedience: “circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.”^u Does faith give glory to God, and set the crown upon his head? Works of evangelical obedience are equally the effects of divine grace, both preventing and assisting of us; and indeed are not so much our works as his: so that the glory of all must needs be entirely resolved into the grace of God, nor can any man in such circumstances, with the least pretence of reason, lay claim to merit, or boast of his own achievements. Hence the apostle magnifies the evangelical method of justification above that of the law, that it wholly excludes all proud reflections upon ourselves: “where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith.”^x The Mosaical economy fostered men up in proud and high thoughts of themselves, they looked upon themselves as a peculiar people, honoured above all other nations of the world; the seed of Abraham, invested with mighty privileges, &c.: whereas the gospel, proceeding upon other principles, takes away all foundations of pride, by acknowledging our acceptance with God, and the power whereby we are enabled to make good the terms and conditions of it, to be the mere result of the Divine grace and mercy, and that the whole scheme of our salvation, as it was the contrivance of the Divine Wisdom, so is the purchase of the merit and satisfaction of our crucified Saviour. Nor is faith itself less than other graces an act of evangelical obedience, and if separated from them, is of no moment or value in the accounts of heaven: “though I have all faith, and have no charity, I am nothing.”^y All faith, be it of what kind soever. To this may be added, that no tolerable account can be given why that which is on all hands granted to be the condition of our salvation (such is evangelical obedience) should not be the condition of our justification: and at the great day, Christians shall be acquitted or condemned according as in this world they

^t 1 John i. 7.^u 1 Cor. vii. 19.^x Rom. iii. 27.^y 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

have fulfilled or neglected the conditions of the gospel: the decretory sentence of absolution that shall then be passed upon good men, shall be nothing but a public and solemn declaration of that private sentence of justification that was passed upon them in this world: so that upon the same terms that they are justified now, they shall be justified and acquitted then; and upon the same terms that they shall then be judged and acquitted, they are justified now, viz. an hearty belief, and a sincere obedience to the gospel. From all which, I hope, it is evident, that when St. Paul denies men to be justified by the works of the law; by works, he either means works done before conversion, and by the strength of men's natural powers, such as enabled them to pride and boast themselves, and lay claim to merit, or (which most-what includes the other) the works of the Mosaic law. And indeed, though the controversies on foot in those times did not plainly determine his reasonings that way, yet the considerations which we have now suggested, sufficiently shew that they could not be meant of any other sense.

XVI. CONJECT. 2. That the doctrines of St. Paul and St. James about justification are fairly consistent with each other. For seeing St. Paul's design in excluding works from justification, was only to deny the works of the Jewish law, or those that were meritorious, as being wrought by our own strength; and in asserting, that, in opposition to such works, we are "justified by faith;" he meant no more, than that either we are justified in an evangelical way, or more particularly by faith intended a practical belief, including evangelical obedience: and seeing, on the other hand, St. James, in affirming "that we are justified by works, and not by faith only;" by works, means no more than evangelical obedience, in opposition to a naked and an empty faith; these two are so far from quarrelling, that they mutually embrace each other, and both, in the main, pursue the same design: and, indeed, if any disagreement seem between them, it is most reasonable that St. Paul should be expounded by St. James, not only because his propositions are so express and positive, and not justly liable to ambiguity, but because he wrote some competent time after the other; and, consequently, as he perfectly understood his meaning, so he was capable to countermine those ill principles which some men had built upon St. Paul's assertions. For it is evident, from several passages in St. Paul's epistles,

that even then many began to mistake his doctrine, and from his assertions about justification by faith and not by works, to infer propositions that might serve the purposes of a bad life : “ they slanderously reported him to say, that we might do evil, that good might come ; that we might continue in sin, that the grace of the gospel might the more abound : ”² they thought, that so long as they did but believe the gospel in the naked notion and speculation of it, it was enough to recommend them to the favour of God, and to serve all the purposes of justification and salvation, however they shaped and steered their lives. Against these men, it is beyond all question plain that St. James levels his epistle, to batter down the growing doctrines of libertinism and profaneness ; to shew the insufficiency of a naked faith and an empty profession of religion, that it is not enough to recommend us to the divine acceptance, and to justify us in the sight of heaven, barely to believe the gospel,^a unless we really obey and practise it ; that a faith destitute of this evangelical obedience is fruitless and unprofitable to salvation ; that it is by these works that faith must appear to be vital and sincere ; that not only Rahab, but Abraham, the father of the faithful, was justified, not by a bare belief of God’s promise, but an hearty obedience to God’s command, in the ready offer of his son, whereby it appears that his faith and obedience did cooperate and conspire together, to render him capable of God’s favour and approbation ; and that “ herein the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, that Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness,” (whence, by the way, nothing can be clearer, than that both these apostles intend the same thing by faith, in the case of Abraham’s justification, and its being “ imputed to him for righteousness,” viz. a practical belief and obedience to the commands of God,) that it follows hence, that faith is not of itself sufficient to justify and make us acceptable to God, unless a proportionable obedience be joined with it ; without which, faith serves no more to these ends and purposes, than a body, destitute of the soul to animate and enliven it, is capable to exercise the functions and offices of the natural life : his meaning, in short, being nothing else, than that good works, or evangelical obedience, is, according to the divine

^{*} Rom. iii. 8. vi. 1.

^a Vid. chap. ii. 14, 15, et seq.

appointment, the condition of the gospel-covenant, without which it is in vain for any to hope for that pardon which Christ hath purchased, and the favour of God, which is necessary to eternal life.

THE LIFE OF SAINT ANDREW.

The sacred history sparing in the acts of the succeeding apostles, and why. St. Andrew's birth-place, kindred, and way of life. John the Baptist's ministry and discipline. St. Andrew educated under his institution. His coming to Christ, and call to be a disciple. His election to the apostolate. The province assigned for his ministry. In what places he chiefly preached. His barbarous usage at Sinope. His planting Christianity at Byzantium, and ordaining Stachys bishop there. His travels in Greece, and preaching at Patræ in Achaia. His arraignment before the proconsul, and resolute defence of the Christian religion. The proconsul's displeasure against him, whence. An account of his martyrdom. His preparatory sufferings, and crucifixion. On what kind of cross he suffered. The miracles reported to be done by his body. Its translation to Constantinople. The great encomium given of him by one of the ancients.

THE sacred story, which has hitherto been very large and copious in describing the acts of the two first apostles, is henceforward very sparing in its accounts, giving us only now and then a few oblique and accidental remarks concerning the rest, and some of them no farther mentioned than the mere recording of their names. For what reasons it pleased the divine wisdom and providence, that no more of their acts should be consigned to writing by the penmen of the holy story, is to us unknown. Probably it might be thought convenient, that no more account should be given of the first plantations of Christianity in the world, than what concerned Judea and the neighbour-countries, at least the most eminent places of the Roman empire, that so the truth of the prophetic predictions might appear, which had foretold, that the "law of the Messiah should come forth from Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Besides, that a particular relation of the acts of so many apostles, done in so many several countries, might have swelled the holy volumes into too great a bulk, and rendered them less serviceable and accommodate to the ordinary use of Christians. Among the apostles that succeed, we first take notice of St. Andrew. He was born

at Bethsaida, a city of Galilee, standing upon the banks of the lake of Gennesareth, son to John or Jonas, a fisherman of that town; brother he was to Simon Peter, but whether elder or younger the ancients do not clearly decide, though the major part intimate him to have been the younger brother, there being only the single authority of Epiphanius on the other side, as we have formerly noted. He was brought up to his father's trade, whereat he laboured, till our Lord called him from catching fish to be a "fisher of men," for which he was fitted by some preparatory institutions, even before his coming unto Christ.

II. John the Baptist was lately risen in the Jewish church: a person whom for the efficacy and impartiality of his doctrine, and the extraordinary strictness and austerities of his life, the Jews generally had in great veneration. He trained up his proselytes under the discipline of repentance; and by urging upon them a severe change and reformation of life, prepared them to entertain the doctrine of the Messiah, whose approach, he told them, was now near at hand; representing to them the greatness of his person, and the importance of the design that he was come upon. Beside the multitudes that promiscuously flocked to the Baptist's discourses, he had, according to the manner of the Jewish masters, some peculiar and select disciples, who more constantly attended upon his lectures, and for the most part waited upon his person. In the number of these was our apostle, who was then with him about Jordan, when our Saviour, who some time since had been baptized, came that way: upon whose approach the Baptist told them, that this was the Messiah, the great person whom he had so often spoken of, to usher in whose appearing his whole ministry was but subservient; that this was the Lamb of God, the true sacrifice that was to expiate the sins of mankind. Upon this testimony, Andrew and another disciple (probably St. John) follow our Saviour to the place of his abode: upon which account he is generally by the fathers and ancient writers styled *πρωτόκλητος*,^a or the "first called disciple:" though in a strict sense he was not so; for though he was the first of the disciples that came to Christ, yet was he not called till afterwards. After some converse with him, Andrew goes to acquaint his brother Simon, and both together came to Christ. Long they stayed not

^a Menæon Græcor. ἡμέρ. λ'. Νοεμβρ. sub. lit. ο'.

with him, but returned to their own home, and to the exercise of their calling; wherein they were employed, when somewhat more than a year after, our Lord, passing through Galilee, found them fishing upon the sea of Tiberias, where he fully satisfied them of the greatness and divinity of his person by the convictive evidence of that miraculous draught of fishes, which they took at his command. And now he told them, he had other work for them to do; that they should no longer deal in fish, but with men, whom they should catch with the efficacy and influence of that doctrine that he was come to deliver to the world; commanding them to follow him, as his immediate disciples and attendants, who accordingly left all and followed him. Shortly after, St. Andrew, together with the rest, was called to the office and honour of the apostolate, made choice of to be one of those that were to be Christ's immediate vicegerents for planting and propagating the Christian church. Little else is particularly recorded of him in the sacred story, being comprehended in the general account of the rest of the apostles.

III. After our Lord's ascension into heaven, and that the Holy Ghost had in its miraculous powers been plentifully shed upon the apostles, to fit them for the great errand they were to go upon, to root out profaneness and idolatry, and to subdue the world to the doctrine of the gospel, it is generally affirmed by the ancients, that the apostles agreed among themselves, (by lot, say some,^b) probably not without the special guidance and direction of the Holy Ghost, what parts of the world they should severally take. In this division, St. Andrew had Scythia and the neighbouring countries primarily allotted him for his province.^c First, then, he travelled through Cappadocia, Galatia, and Bithynia, and instructed them in the faith of Christ; passing all along the Euxine sea, (formerly called Axenus,^d from the barbarous and inhospitable temper of the people thereabouts, who were wont to sacrifice strangers, and of their skulls to make cups to drink in at their feasts and banquets,) and so into the solitudes of Scythia. An ancient author^e (though whence deriving his

^b Socr. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 19.

^c Orig. in Gen. l. iii. ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 1. Niceph. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 39.

^d Strab. Geogr. l. vii. p. 206.

^e Commentar. de S. Andr. Apost. et πρωτοκλήτην, extat. Græc. in Menæo Græcor. ήμέρ. λ'. τοῦ Νοεμβρ. sub lit. π'.

intelligence I know not) gives us a more particular account of his travels and transactions in these parts. He tells us, that he first came to Amynsus, where being entertained by a Jew, he went into the synagogue, discoursed to them concerning Christ, and from the prophecies of the Old Testament proved him to be the Messiah, and the Saviour of the world. Having here converted and baptized many, ordered their public meeting, and ordained them priests, he went next to Trapezus, a maritime city upon the Euxine sea, whence, after many other places, he came to Nice, where he stayed two years, preaching and working miracles with great success; thence to Nicomedia, and so to Chalcedon; whence, sailing through the Propontis, he came by the Euxine sea to Heraclea, and from thence to Amastris: in all which places he met with great difficulties and discouragements, but overcame all with an invincible patience and resolution. He next came to Sinope, a city situate upon the same sea, a place famous both for the birth and burial of the great king Mithridates; here, as my author reports from the ancients, (*ὡς φασὶ λόγους παλαιοὶ*.) he met with his brother Peter, with whom he stayed a considerable time at this place: as a monument whereof he tells us, that the chairs made of white stone, wherein they were wont to sit while they taught the people, were still extant, and commonly shewed in his time. The inhabitants of this city were mostly Jews, who partly through zeal for their religion, partly through the barbarousness of their manners, were quickly exasperated against the apostle, and contriving together attempted to burn the house wherein he sojourned: however, they treated him with all the instances of savage cruelty, throwing him to the ground, stamping upon him with their feet, pulling and dragging him from place to place; some beating him with clubs, others pelting him with stones, and some, the better to satisfy their revenge, biting off his flesh with their teeth; till apprehending they had fully despatched him, they cast him out of the city: But he miraculously recovered, and publicly returned into the city, whereby, and by some other miracles which he wrought amongst them, he reduced many to a better mind, converting them to the faith. Departing hence, he went again to Amynsus, and then to Trapezus; thence to Neocæsarea, and to Samosata, (the birth-place of the witty but impious Lucian,) where having baffled the acute and wise philosophers, he pur-

posed to return to Jerusalem : whence, after some time, he betook himself to his former provinces, travelling to the country of the Abasgi, where, at Sebastople, situate upon the eastern shore of the Euxine sea, between the influx of the rivers Phasis and Apsarus, he successfully preached the gospel to the inhabitants of that city. Hence he removed into the country of the Zecchi, and the Bosphorani, part of the Asiatic Scythia, or Sarmatia ; but finding the inhabitants very barbarous and intractable, he stayed not long among them, only at Cherson, or Chersonesus, a great and populous city within the Bosphorus, he continued some time, instructing and confirming them in the faith. Hence taking ship, he sailed across the sea to Sinope, situate in Paphlagonia, the royal seat of the great king Mithridates, to encourage and confirm the churches which he had lately planted in those parts ; and here he ordained Philologus, formerly one of St. Paul's disciples, bishop of this city.

IV. Hence he came to Byzantium, (since called Constantinople,) where he instructed them in the knowledge of the Christian religion, founded a church for divine worship, and ordained Stachys (whom St. Paul calls his beloved Stachys) first bishop of that place. Baronius,^f indeed, is unwilling to believe this, desirous to engross the honour of it to St. Peter, whom he will have to have been the first planter of Christianity in these parts. But besides that Baronius's authority is very slight and insignificant in this case, (as we have before noted in St. Peter's Life,) this matter is expressly asserted, not only by Nicephorus Callistus,^g but by another Nicephorus,^h patriarch of Constantinople, and who therefore may be presumed knowing in his predecessors in that see. Banished out of the city by him, who at that time usurped the government, he fled to Argyropolis, a place near at hand, where he preached the gospel for two years together with good success, converting great numbers to the faith. After this, he travelled over Thrace, Macedonia, Thessaly, Achaia ; Nazianzen adds Epyrus :ⁱ in all which places for many years he preached and propagated Christianity, and confirmed the doctrine that he taught with great signs and miracles : at last he came to Patræ,

^f Ad Ann. 44. n. 31. vid. ad Ann. 314. n. 94, 95, etc.

^g Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 39. l. v. c. 6.

^h Niceph. C. P. in Chronogr. a Scal. edit. p. 309. vid. etiam Mæn. Græc. ubi supr.

ⁱ Orat. xxv. p. 438.

a city of Achaia, where he gave his last and great testimony to it; I mean, laid down his own life to ratify and ensure it: in describing whose martyrdom, we shall for the main follow the account that is given us in the Acts of his Passion,^k pretended to have been written by the presbyters and deacons of Achaia, present at his martyrdom; which though I dare not, with some, assert to be the genuine work of those persons, yet can it not be denied to be of considerable antiquity, being mentioned by Philastrius,^l who flourished anno 380, and were no doubt written long before his time. The sum of it is this.

V. Ægeas, proconsul of Achaia, came at this time to Patræ, where observing that multitudes were fallen off from paganism, and had embraced Christianity, he endeavoured, by all arts both of favour and cruelty, to reduce the people to their old idolatries. To him the apostle resolutely makes his address, calmly puts him in mind, that he, being but a judge of men, should own and revere him, who was the supreme and impartial judge of all; that he should give him that divine honour which was due to him, and leave off the impieties of his false heathen worship. The proconsul derided him, as an innovator in religion, a propagator of that superstition whose author the Jews had infamously put to death upon a cross. Hereat the apostle took occasion to discourse to him of the infinite love and kindness of our Lord, who came into the world to purchase the salvation of mankind, and for that end did not disdain to die upon the cross. To whom the proconsul answered, that he might persuade them so that would believe him; for his part, if he did not comply with him in doing sacrifice to the gods, he would cause him to suffer upon that cross which he had so much extolled and magnified. St. Andrew replied, that he did sacrifice every day to God, the only true and omnipotent Being, not with fumes and bloody offerings, but in the sacrifice of the immaculate Lamb of God. The issue was, the apostle was committed to prison; whereat the people were so enraged, that it had broken out into a mutiny, had not the apostle restrained them, persuading them to imitate the mildness and patience of our meek humble Saviour, and not to hinder him from that crown of martyrdom that now waited for him.

VI. The next day he was again brought before the proconsul, who persuaded him that he would not foolishly destroy himself,

^k Extant apud Sur. ad diem 30 Novemb.

^l De Hæres. c. 89.

but live and enjoy with him the pleasures of this life. The apostle told him, that he should have with him eternal joys, if, renouncing his execrable idolatries, he would heartily entertain Christianity, which he had hitherto so successfully preached amongst them. That, answered the proconsul, is the very reason why I am so earnest with you to sacrifice to the gods, that those whom you have every where seduced may, by your example, be brought to return back to that ancient religion which they have forsaken ; otherwise I will cause you, with exquisite tortures, to be crucified. The apostle replied, that now he saw it was in vain any longer to deal with him, a person incapable of sober counsels, and hardened in his own blindness and folly ; that, as for himself, he might do his worst, and if he had one torment greater than another, he might heap that upon him : the greater constancy he shewed in his sufferings for Christ, the more acceptable he should be to his Lord and Master. *Ægeas* could now hold no longer, but passed the sentence of death upon him ; and *Nicephorus* gives us some more particular account of the proconsul's displeasure and rage against him ;^m which was, that, amongst others, he had converted his wife *Maximilla*, and his brother *Stratocles*, to the Christian faith, having cured them of desperate distempers that had seized upon them.

VII. The proconsul first commanded him to be scourged, seven lictors successively whipping his naked body ; and seeing his invincible patience and constancy, commanded him to be crucified, but not to be fastened to the cross with nails but cords, that so his death might be more lingering and tedious. As he was led to execution, to which he went with a cheerful and composed mind, the people cried out, that he was an innocent and good man, and unjustly condemned to die.ⁿ Being come within sight of the cross, he saluted it with this kind of address : that he had long desired and expected this happy hour, that the cross had been consecrated by the body of Christ hanging on it, and adorned with his members as with so many inestimable jewels ; that he came joyful and triumphing to it, that it might receive him as a disciple and follower of him who once hung upon it, and be the means to carry him safe unto his Master, having been the instru-

^m Lib. ii. c. 39. vid. *Menæon Græc.* ad diem 30 Novemb. ubi eadem habent.

ⁿ Bern. Sermon. ii. de S. Andr. p. 327.

ment upon which his Master had redeemed him. Having prayed, and exhorted the people to constancy and perseverance in that religion which he had delivered to them, he was fastened to the cross, whereon he hung two days, teaching and instructing the people all the time; and when great importunities in the mean while were used to the proconsul to spare his life, he earnestly begged of our Lord, that he might at this time depart, and seal the truth of his religion with his blood. God heard his prayer, and he immediately expired, on the last of November, though in what year no certain account can be recovered.

VII. There seems to have been something peculiar in that cross that was the instrument of his martyrdom, commonly affirmed to have been a cross decussate, two pieces of timber crossing each other in the middle, in the form of the letter X, hence usually known by the name of St. Andrew's cross; though there want not those,^o who affirm him to have been crucified upon an olive tree. His body being taken down and embalmed, was decently and honourably interred by Maximilla, a lady of great quality and estate, and whom Nicephorus, I know not upon what ground, makes wife to the proconsul. As for that report of Gregory,^p bishop of Tours, that on the anniversary day of his martyrdom, there was wont to flow from St. Andrew's tomb a most fragrant and precious oil, which, according to its quantity, denoted the scarceness or plenty of the following year; and that the sick being anointed with this oil, were restored to their former health; I leave to the reader's discretion, to believe what he please of it: for my part, if any ground of truth in the story, I believe it no more, than that it was an exhalation and sweating forth at some times of those rich costly perfumes and ointments wherewith his body was embalmed after his crucifixion. Though I must confess this conjecture to be impossible, if it be true what my author adds, that some years the oil burst out in such plenty, that the stream arose to the middle of the church. His body was afterwards, by Constantine the Great,^q solemnly removed to Constantinople, and buried in the great church which he had built to the honour of the apostles: which being taken down

^o Chrysost. in S. Andr. Serm. cxxxiii. Hippol. Comment. MS. Gr. ap. Bar. Not. in Martyr. ad 30 Novemb.

^p De Glor. Martyr. l. i. c. 31.

^q Hieron. adv. Vigil. vol. iv. par. ii. p. 283.

some hundred years after by Justinian the emperor,^r in order to its reparation, the body was found in a wooden coffin, and again reposed in its proper place.

IX. I shall conclude the history of this apostle with that encomiastic character which one of the ancients gives of him.^s “St. Andrew was the first-born of the apostolic choir, the main and prime pillar of the church, a rock before the rock, (*ὁ πρὸ Πέτρου Πέτρος*,) ‘the foundation of that foundation,’ the first-fruits of the beginning, a caller of others before he was called himself; he preached that gospel that was not yet believed or entertained; revealed and made known that life to his brother, which he had not yet perfectly learned himself. So great treasures did that one question bring him, ‘Master, where dwellest thou?’ which he soon perceived by the answer given him, and which he deeply pondered in his mind, ‘Come and see.’ How art thou become a prophet? whence thus divinely skilful? what is it that thou thus soundest in Peter’s ears? [‘We have found him,’ &c.] why dost thou attempt to compass him, whom thou canst not comprehend? how can he be found, who is omnipresent? But he knew well what he said: We have found him, whom Adam lost, whom Eve injured, whom the clouds of sin have hidden from us, and whom our transgressions had hitherto made a stranger to us,” &c. So that of all our Lord’s apostles, St. Andrew had thus far the honour to be the first preacher of the gospel.

^r Procop. de ædific. Justin. l. i.

^s Hesych. Presb. Hierosolym. apud Phot. cod. CCLXIX. col. 1488.

THE LIFE OF SAINT JAMES THE GREAT.

St. James, why surnamed the Great. His country and kindred. His alliance to Christ. His trade and way of life. Our Lord brought up to a manual trade. The quick repartee of a Christian schoolmaster to Libanius. His being called to be a disciple, and great readiness to follow Christ. His election to the apostolic office, and peculiar favours from Christ. Why our Lord chose some few of the apostles to be witnesses of the more private passages of his life. The imposition of a new name at his election to the apostleship. He and his brother styled Boanerges, and why. The zeal and activity of their temper. Their ambition to sit on Christ's right and left hand in his kingdom, and confident promise of suffering. This ill resented by the rest. Our Lord's discourse concerning the nature of the evangelical state. Where he preached after Christ's ascension. The story of his going into Spain exploded. Herod Agrippa in favour with the Roman emperors. The character of his temper. His zeal for the law of Moses. His condemning St. James to death. The sudden conversion of his accuser, as he was led to martyrdom. Their being beheaded. The divine justice that pursued Herod. His grandeur and arrogance at Cæsarea. His miserable death. The story of the translation of St. James's corpse to Compostella in Spain, and the miracles said to be done there.

ST. JAMES, surnamed the Great, either because of his age, being much older than the other, or for some peculiar honours and favours which our Lord conferred upon him, was by country a Galilean; born, probably, either at Capernaum or Bethsaida, being one of Simon Peter's partners in the trade of fishing. He was the son of Zebdai, or Zebedee,^a (and probably the same whom the Jews mention in their Talmud, רבי יעקוב בר זבדי, "rabbi James, or Jacob, the son of Zebedee,") a fisherman, and the many servants which he kept for that employment (a circumstance not taken notice of in any other) speak him a man of some more considerable note in that trade and way of life; *ἐπίσημος τῶν ἐν Γαλιλαία μετοικούντων ἀνδρῶν*, as Nicephorus notes.^b His mother's name was Mary, surnamed Salome, called first Taviphilia, says an ancient Arabic writer,^c the daughter, as is most probable, not

^a Mark i. 20.

^b Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 3.

^c Apud Kirsten. de vit. quat. Evangel. p. 47.

wife, of Cleopas, sister to Mary the mother of our Lord ;^d not her own sister properly so called, (the blessed Virgin being in all likelihood an only daughter,) but cousin-german, styled her sister, according to the mode and custom of the Jews, who were wont to call all such near relations by the names of brothers and sisters ; and in this respect he had the honour of a near relation to our Lord himself. His education was in the trade of fishing : no employment is base, that is honest and industrious, nor can it be thought mean and dishonourable to him, when it is remembered that our Lord himself, the Son of God, stooped so low, as not only to become the [reputed] son of a carpenter, but, during the retirements of his private life, to work himself at his father's trade ; not devoting himself merely to contemplations, nor withdrawing from all useful society with the world, and hiding himself in the solitudes of an anchoret, but busying himself in an active course of life, working at the trade of a carpenter,* and particularly (as one of the ancients tells us^f) making ploughs and yokes. And this the sacred history does not only plainly intimate, but it is generally asserted by the ancient writers of the church ;^g a thing so notorious, that the heathens used to object it as a reproach to Christianity : thence that smart and acute repartee which a Christian schoolmaster made to Libanius, the famous orator, at Antioch,^h when upon Julian's expedition into Persia, (where he was killed,) he asked in scorn, what the carpenter's son was now a doing ? the Christian replied, with salt enough, that the great artificer of the world, whom he scoffingly called the carpenter's son, was making a coffin for his master Julian ; the news of whose death was brought soon after. But this only by the way.

II. St. James applied himself to his father's trade, not discouraged with the meanness, not sinking under the difficulties of it ; and, as usually the blessings of heaven meet men in the way of an honest and industrious diligence, it was in the exercise of this calling, when our Saviour, passing by the sea of Galilee, saw him and his brother in the ship, and called them to be his disciples. A divine power went along with the word,

^d John xix. 25.

^e Mark vi. 3. Matt. xiii. 55.

^f Just. Mart. dial. cum Tryph. a. 88.

^g Bas. Constit. Monast. c. 4. Vid. Hilar. in Matt. Can. 4.

^h Theodor. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 18.

which they no sooner heard, but cheerfully complied with it, immediately leaving all to follow him. They did not stay to dispute his commands, to argue the probability of his promise, solicitously to inquire into the minute consequences of the undertaking, what troubles and hazards might attend this new employment, but readily delivered up themselves to whatever services he should appoint them. And the cheerfulness of their obedience is yet farther considerable, that they left their aged father in the ship behind them. For elsewhere we find others excusing themselves from an immediate attendance upon Christ,ⁱ upon pretence that they must go bury their father, or take their leave of their kindred at home. No such slight and trivial pretences could stop the resolution of our apostles, who broke through these considerations, and quitted their present interests and relations. Say not it was unnaturally done of them to desert their father, an aged person, and in some measure unable to help himself. For, besides that they left servants with him to attend him, it is not cruelty to our earthly, but obedience to our heavenly Father, to leave the one, that we may comply with the call and summons of the other. It was the triumph of Abraham's faith, when God called him to leave his kindred and his father's house, to go out and sojourn in a foreign country, not knowing whither he went. Nor can we doubt but that Zebedee himself would have gone along with them, had not his age given him a *supersedeas* from such an active and ambulatory course of life. But though they left him at this time, it is very reasonable to suppose, that they took care to instruct him in the doctrine of the Messiah, and to acquaint him with the glad tidings of salvation; especially since we find their mother Salome so hearty a friend to, so constant a follower of our Saviour: but this (if we may believe the account which one gives of it^k) was after her husband's decease, who probably lived not long after, dying before the time of our Saviour's passion.

III. It was not long after this, that he was called from the station of an ordinary disciple to the apostolical office; and not only so, but honoured with some peculiar acts of favour beyond most of the apostles, being one of the three whom our Lord usually made choice of to admit to the more intimate transactions of his life, from which the others were excluded.

ⁱ Luke ix. 59—61.

^k Zachar. Chrysopol. Comm. in Concord. Evang. p. 111.

Thus, with Peter and his brother John, he was taken to the miraculous raising of Jairus's daughter; admitted to Christ's glorious transfiguration upon the mount, and the discourses that there passed between him and the two great ministers of heaven; taken along with him into the garden, to be a spectator of those bitter agonies which the holy Jesus was to undergo, as the preparatory sufferings to his passion. What were the reasons of our Lord's admitting these three apostles to these more special acts of favour than the rest, is not easy to determine: though surely our Lord, who governed all his actions by principles of the highest prudence and reason, did it for wise and proper ends; whether it was that he designed these three to be more solemn and peculiar witnesses of some particular passages of his life than the other apostles, or that they would be more eminently useful and serviceable in some parts of the apostolic office, or that hereby he would the better prepare and encourage them against suffering, as intending them for some more eminent kinds of martyrdom or suffering than the rest were to undergo.

IV. Nor was it the least instance of that particular honour which our Lord conferred upon these three apostles, that at his calling them to the apostolate, he gave them the addition of a new name and title. A thing not unusual of old, for God to impose a new name upon persons, when designing them for some great and peculiar services and employments; thus he did to Abraham and Jacob: nay, the thing was customary among the Gentiles, as, had we no other instances, might appear from those which the scripture gives us, of Pharaoh's giving a new name to Joseph when advancing him to be viceroy of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar to Daniel, &c. Thus did our Lord in the election of these three apostles: Simon he surnamed Peter; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, he surnamed Boanerges; which is, the sons of thunder.¹ What our Lord particularly intended in this title, is easier to conjecture than certainly to determine; some think it was given them upon the account of their being present in the mount, when a voice came out of the cloud, and said, "This is my beloved Son,"^m &c. The like whereto when the people heard at another time, they cried out, that it thun-

¹ Mark iii. 16, 17. Hieron. Comm. in Marc. c. 3. Gaudent. Brix. Tract. i. de Lect. Evang. seu, in ordine, viii.

^m Matt. xvii. 5.

dered.ⁿ But besides that this account is in itself very slender and inconsiderable, if so, then the title must equally have belonged to Peter, who was then present with them. Others think it was upon the account of their loud, bold, and resolute preaching Christianity to the world;^o fearing no threatenings, daunted with no oppositions, but going on to thunder in the ears of the secure sleepy world; rousing and awakening the consciences of men with the earnestness and vehemency of their preaching, as thunder, which is called God's voice, powerfully shakes the natural world, and breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon: or, if it relate to the doctrines they delivered, it may signify their teaching the great mysteries and speculations of the gospel in a profounder strain than the rest; *υἱοὺς δὲ βροντῆς ὀνομάζει τοὺς τοῦ Ζεβεδαίου, ὡς μεγαλοκήρυκας καὶ θελογικωτάτους*, as Theophylact notes;^p which how true it might be of our St. James, the scripture is wholly silent; but was certainly verified of his brother John, whose gospel is so full of the more sublime notions and mysteries of the gospel concerning Christ's deity, eternal preexistence, &c., that he is generally affirmed by the ancients, not so much to speak, as thunder. Probably the expression may denote no more, than that in general they were to be prime and eminent ministers in this new scene and state of things; the introducing of the gospel, or evangelical dispensation, being called "a voice shaking the heavens and the earth;"^q and so is exactly correspondent to the native importance of the word signifying an earthquake,^r or a vehement commotion that makes a noise like to thunder.

V. However it was, our Lord, I doubt not, herein had respect to the furious and resolute disposition of those two brothers, who seem to have been of a more fierce and fiery temper than the rest of the apostles; whereof we have this memorable instance: our Lord being resolved upon his journey to Jerusalem, sent some of his disciples as harbingers to prepare his way, who coming to a village of Samaria, were uncivilly rejected, and refused entertainment; probably, because of that old and inveterate quarrel that was between the Samaritans and the Jews, and

ⁿ John xii. 29.

^o Vict. Antioch. Comment. in Marc. c. 2.

^p Comm. in Marc. iii.

^q Heb. xii. 26.

^r Hag. ii. 7. ubi מרעש, "tremere faciam." בני רעש, "Filii commotionis seu magnæ concussionis."

more especially at this time, because that our Saviour seemed to slight Mount Gerizim (where was their staple and solemn place of worship) by passing it by, to go worship at Jerusalem; the reason, in all likelihood, why they denied him those common courtesies and conveniences due to all travellers. This piece of rudeness and inhumanity was presently so deeply resented by St. James and his brother, that they came to their Master, to know whether, as Elias did of old, they might not pray down fire from heaven to consume these barbarous and inhospitable people.* So apt are men for every trifle to call upon heaven, to minister to the extravagancies of their own impotent and unreasonable passions. But our Lord rebukes their zeal; tells them they quite mistook the case; that this was not the frame and temper of his disciples and followers, the nature and design of that evangelical dispensation that he was come to set on foot in the world; which was a more pure and perfect, a more mild and gentle institution, than what was under the Old Testament in the times of Moses and Elias, "the Son of man being come not to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

VI. The holy Jesus not long after set forward in his journey to Jerusalem in order to his crucifixion, and the better to prepare the minds of his apostles for his death and departure from them, he told them what he was to suffer, and yet that after all he should rise again. They, whose minds were yet big with expectations of a temporal power and monarchy, understood not well the meaning of his discourses to them. However, St. James and his brother, supposing the resurrection that he spoke of would be the time when his power and greatness would commence, prompted their mother Salome to put up a petition for them.[†] She, presuming probably on her relation to Christ, and knowing that our Saviour had promised his apostles, "that when he was come into his kingdom, they should sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel," and that he already honoured her two sons with an intimate familiarity, after leave modestly asked for her address, begged of him, that when he took possession of his kingdom, her two sons, James and John, might have the principal places of honour and dignity next to his own person, the one sitting on his right hand, and the other on his left, as the heads of Judah and Joseph had the first

* Luke ix. 54.

† Matt. xx. 20.

places among the rulers of the tribes in the Jewish nation. Our Lord, directing his discourse to the two apostles, at whose suggestion he knew their mother had made this address, told them, they quite mistook the nature of his kingdom, which consisted not in external grandeur and sovereignty, but in an inward life and power, wherein the highest place would be to take the greatest pains, and to undergo the heaviest troubles and sufferings; that they should do well to consider, whether they were able to endure what he was to undergo, to drink of that bitter cup which he was to drink of, and to go through that baptism wherein he was shortly to be baptized in his own blood. Our apostles were not yet cured of their ambitious humour, but either not understanding the force of our Saviour's reasonings, or too confidently presuming upon their own strength, answered, that they could do all this. But he, the goodness of whose nature ever made him put the best and most candid interpretation upon men's words and actions, yea, even those of his greatest enemies, did not take the advantage of their hasty and inconsiderate reply, to treat them with sharp and quick reproofs, but mildly owning their forwardness to suffer, told them, that as for sufferings, they should indeed suffer as well as he, (and so we accordingly find they did, St. James after all dying a violent death, St. John enduring great miseries and torments, and, might we believe Chrysostom and Theophylact, martyrdom itself, though others nearer to those times assure us he died a natural death,) but, for any peculiar honour or dignity, he would not, by an absolute and peremptory favour of his own, dispose it any otherwise than according to those rules and instructions which he had received of his Father. The rest of the apostles were offended with this ambitious request of the sons of Zebedee; but our Lord, to calm their passions, discoursed to them of the nature of the evangelic state, that it was not here, as in the kingdoms and signories of this world, where the great ones receive homage and fealty from those that are under them, but that in his service humility was the way to honour; that whoever took most pains, and did most good, would be the greatest person, preeminence being here to be measured by industry and diligence, and a ready condescension to the meanest offices that might be subservient to the souls of men; and that this was no more than what he sufficiently taught them by his own example;

being come into the world, not to be served himself with any pompous circumstances of state and splendour, but to serve others, and to lay down his life for the redemption of mankind: with which discourse the storm blew over, and their exorbitant passions began on all hands to be allayed and pacified.

VII. What became of St. James after our Saviour's ascension we have no certain account, either from sacred or ecclesiastical stories. Sophronius tells us,^a that he preached to the dispersed Jews; which surely he means of that dispersion that was made of the Jewish converts after the death of Stephen. The Spanish writers generally contend, that having preached the gospel up and down Judea and Samaria, after the death of Stephen, he came to these western parts, and particularly into Spain, (some add Britain and Ireland,^x) where he planted Christianity, and appointed some select disciples to perfect what he had begun, and then returned back to Jerusalem. Of this there are no footsteps in any ancient writers earlier than the middle ages of the church, when it is mentioned by Isidore,^y the Breviary of Toledo,^z and Arabic book of Anastasius,^a patriarch of Antioch, concerning the passions of the martyrs, and some others after them. Nay, Baronius himself,^b though endeavouring to render the account as smooth and plausible as he could, and to remove what objections lay against it, yet after all confesses, he did it only to shew that the thing was not impossible, nor to be accounted such a monstrous and extravagant fable as some men made it to be, as indeed elsewhere he plainly and peremptorily denies and disproves it.^c He could not but see, that the shortness of this apostle's life, the apostles continuing all in one entire body at Jerusalem, even after the dispersing of the other Christians, probably not going out of the bounds of Judea for many years after our Lord's ascension, could not comport with so tedious and difficult a voyage, and the time which he must necessarily spend in those parts: and therefore it is safest to

^a Apud Hieron. de Script. Eccles. in Jacob.

^x Pseudo-Dextr. Chronic. Vincent. Bellova. Spec. Historial. l. viii. c. 7.

^y De vit. et obit. SS. utriusque Test. c. 72.

^z Brev. Tol. Instit. S. Isidori.

^a Apud Marian. de adv. Jac. in Hispan. c. 7. sed ex fide aliorum.

^b In Not. ad Martyrol. ad 25 Jul. p. 452. Vid. Orat. Roder. Archiep. Tol. in Not. G. Loays. ad decret. Gund. vol. iv. Concil. p. 548, 549.

^c Ad Ann. 816. n 69, 70.

confine his ministry to Judea, and the parts thereabouts, and to seek for him at Jerusalem, where we are sure to find him.

VIII. Herod Agrippa, son of Aristobulus, and grandchild of Herod the Great, (under whom Christ was born,) had been in great favour with the late emperor Caligula, but much more with his successor Claudius, who confirmed his predecessor's grant, with the addition of Judea, Samaria, and Abylene, the remaining portions of his grandfather's dominions. Claudius being settled in the empire, over comes Herod from Rome to take possession, and to manage the affairs of his new acquired kingdom: a prince noble and generous, prudent and politic, thoroughly versed in all the arts of courtship, able to oblige enemies, and to mollify or decline the displeasure of the emperor, (witness his subtle and cunning insinuations to Caligula, when he commanded the Jews to account him a god;^d) he was one that knew, let the wind blow which way it would, how to gain the point he aimed at; of a courteous and affable demeanour, but withal *τὰ πάτρια καθαρῶς ἐτήρει*,^e a mighty zealot for the Jewish religion, and a most accurate observer of the Mosaic law; keeping himself free from all legal impurities, and suffering no day to pass over his head, in which he himself was not present at sacrifice. Being desirous, in the entrance upon his sovereignty, to insinuate himself into the favour of the populacy, and, led no less by his own zealous inclination, he saw no better way, than to fall heavy upon the Christians; a sort of men, whom he knew the Jews infinitely hated, as a novel and an upstart sect, whose religion proclaimed open defiance to the Mosaic institutions. Hereupon he began to raise a persecution; but, alas, the commonalty were too mean a sacrifice to fall as the only victim to his zeal and popular designs, he must have a fatter and more honourable sacrifice. It was not long before St. James's stirring and active temper, his bold reproving of the Jews, and vigorous contending for the truth and excellency of the Christian religion, rendered him a fit object for his turn. Him he commands to be apprehended, cast into prison, and sentence of death to be passed upon him. As he was led forth to the place of martyrdom,^f the soldier or officer that had guarded him to the tribunal, or rather his

^d Vid. Epist. ejus ad Caium Imp. ap. Phil. de Legat. ad Caium, p. 1031. et seqq.

^e Joseph. Antiq. Jud. l. xix. c. 7.

^f Clem. Alex. Hypotyp. l. vii. apud Euseb. l. ii. c. 9.

accuser, (and so Suidas expressly tells us it was,^g) having been convinced by that mighty courage and constancy which St. James shewed at the time of his trial, repented of what he had done, came and fell down at the apostle's feet, and heartily begged pardon for what he had said against him. The holy man, after a little surprise at the thing, raised him up, embraced, and kissed him: "Peace, (said he,) my son, peace be to thee, and the pardon of thy faults." Whereupon, before them all, he publicly professed himself to be a Christian, and so both were beheaded at the same time. Thus fell James, the apostolic proto-martyr, the first of that number that gained the crown, cheerfully taking that cup, which he had long since told his Lord he was most ready to drink of.

IX. But the Divine vengeance, that never sleeps, suffered not the death of this innocent and righteous man to pass long unrevenge'd; of which, though St. Luke gives us but a short account, yet Josephus,^h who might himself remember it, being a youth, at that time, of seven or eight years of age, sets down the story with its particular circumstances, agreeing almost exactly with the sacred historian. Shortly after St. James's martyrdom, Herod removed to Cæsarea, being resolved to make war upon the neighbouring Tyrians and Sidonians. While he was here, he proclaimed solemn sights and festival entertainments to be held in honour of Cæsar, to which there flocked a great confluence of all the nobility thereabouts. Early in the morning on the second day, he came with great state into the theatre, to make an oration to the people, being clothed in a robe all over curiously wrought with silver; which, encountering with the beams of the rising sun, reflected such a lustre upon the eyes of the people, (who make sensible appearances the only true measures of greatness,) as begot an equal wonder and veneration in them, crying out, (prompted, no doubt, by flatterers, who began the cry,) that it was some deity which they beheld, and that he who spake to them must be something above the ordinary standard of humanity. This impious applause Herod received, without any token of dislike, or sense of that injury that was hereby done to the Supreme Being of the world. But a sudden accident changed the scene, and turned the comic part into a black fatal tragedy. Looking up, he espied an owl sitting upon

^g Suid. in voc. Ἡρώδης.

^h Antiq. Jud. l. xix. c. 7.

a rope over his head,ⁱ (as probably also he did an angel, for so St. Luke mentions it,) which he presently beheld as the fatal messenger of his death, as heretofore it had been of his prosperity and success. An incurable melancholy immediately seized upon his mind, as exquisite torments did upon his bowels, caused, without question, by those worms St. Luke speaks of, which immediately fed and preyed upon him. "Behold (said he, turning to those about him) the deity you admired, and yourselves evidently convinced of flattery and falsehood; see me here, by the laws of fate, condemned to die, whom just now you styled immortal."^k Being removed into the palace, his pains still increased upon him; and though the people mourned and wept, fasted and prayed for his life and health, yet his acute torments got the upper hand, and after five days put a period to his life. But to return to St. James.

X. Being put to death, his body is said to have taken a second voyage into Spain, where we are with confidence enough told it rests at this day. Indeed, I met with a very formal account of its translation thither, written (says the publisher) above six hundred years since, by a monk of the abbey of La Fleury in France;^l the sum whereof is this. The apostles at Jerusalem designing Ctesiphon for Spain, ordained him bishop; and others being joined to his assistance, they took the body of St. James, and went on board a ship without oars, without a pilot, or any to steer and conduct their voyage, trusting only to the merits of that apostle whose remains they carried along with them. In seven days they arrived at a port in Spain, where landing, the corpse was suddenly taken from them, and, with great appearances of an extraordinary light from heaven, conveyed, they knew not whither, to the place of its interment. The men, you may imagine, were exceedingly troubled, that so great a treasure should be ravished from them; but, upon their prayers and tears, they were conducted by an angel to the place where the apostle was buried, twelve miles from the sea. Here they addressed themselves to a rich noble matron, called Luparia, who had a great

ⁱ Hunc Josephi locum laudans Eusebius, totum bubonis mentionem prætermittit, ejusque loco ἄγγελος substituit: mente quidem pia, at mala fide.

^k Joseph. loc. citat.

^l Comment. de Translat. S. Jacob. Apost. ap. Joan a Bosc. Biblioth. Floriac. par. ii. p. 183, etc.

estate in those parts, but a severe idolatress, begging of her that they might have leave to entomb the bones of the holy apostle within her jurisdiction. She entertained them with contempt and scorn, with curses and execrations, bidding them go and ask leave of the king of the country: they did so, but were by him treated with all the instances of rage and fury, and pursued by him, till himself perished in the attempt. They returned back to their Gal-læcian matron, whom, by many miracles, and especially the destroying a dragon that miserably infested those parts, they at last made convert to the faith; who thereupon commanded her images to be broken, the altars to be demolished, and her own idol-temple, being cleansed and purged, to be dedicated to the honour of St. James: by which means Christianity mightily prevailed, and triumphed over idolatry in all those countries. This is the sum of the account, call it romance or history, which I do not desire to impose any farther upon the reader's faith, than he shall find himself disposed to believe it. I add no more, than that his body was afterwards translated from Iria Flavia (the place of its first repose) to Compostella: though a learned person will have it to have been but one and the same place;^m and that after the story of St. James had gotten some footing in the belief of men, it began to be called *ad Jacobum Apostolum*; thence, in after times, *Giacomo Postolo*; which was at last jumbled into Compostella; where it were to tire both the reader and myself to tell him with what solemn veneration, and incredible miracles reported to be done here, this apostle's relics are worshipped at this day: whence Baronius calls it the great store-house of miracles,ⁿ lying open to the whole world, and wisely confesses it one of the best arguments to prove that his body was translated thither; and I should not scruple to be of his mind, could I be assured that such miracles were truly done there.

^m Ia. Voss. *Observat. in Pomp. Mel.* l. iii. c. 1.

ⁿ *Ad Ann.* 816. n. 72.

THE LIFE OF SAINT JOHN.

His kindred and relations, whether eminent for nobility. The peculiar favours conferred upon him by our Saviour. His lying in our Lord's bosom. His attending at the crucifixion. Our Lord's committing the blessed Virgin to his care. The great intimacy between him and Peter. How long he resided at Jerusalem. Asia his apostolical province. His planting Christianity there, and in other parts of the East. His being sent prisoner to Rome, and being put into a cauldron of boiling oil by the command of Domitian. His banishment into Patmos. Transportation, what kind of punishment. *Capitis diminutio*, what. His writing the Apocalypse there. The tradition of his hand, wherewith he wrote it, being still kept there. His return to Ephesus, and governing the affairs of that province. His great age, and death. The fancy of his being still alive, whence derived by the ancients. The tradition of his going alive into his grave, and sleeping there. Several counterfeits pretending themselves to be St. John. His celibacy; whether he was ever married. His humility. His admirable love and charity, and hearty recommending it to the last. His charity to men's souls. His endangering himself to reclaim a debauched young man. His singular vigilancy against heretics and seducers. His public disowning Cerinthus's company. Cerinthus, who, and what his principles. The heresy of Ebion, what. Nicolaitans, who; whence their original. An account of Nicolas the deacon's separating from his wife. The vile principles and practices of his pretended followers. St. John's writings. His Revelation. Dionysius Alexandrinus's judgment concerning it and its author. Asserted and proved to be St. John's. The ground of doubting, what. His gospel when and where written. The solemn preparation, and causes moving him to undertake it. The subject of it sublime and mysterious. Admired and cited by heathen philosophers. Its translation into Hebrew. His first epistle, and the design of it. His two other epistles, to whom written, and why not admitted of old. His style and way of writing considered. The great encomium given of his writings by the ancient fathers.

ST. JOHN was a Galilean, the son of Zebedee and Salome, younger brother to St. James, together with whom he was brought up in the trade of fishing. St. Jerome makes him remarkable upon the account of his nobility,^a whereby he became acquainted with the high-priest, and resolutely ventured himself amongst the Jews at our Saviour's trial, prevailed to introduce Peter into the hall, was the only apostle that attended our Lord at his

^a Hieron. Epitaph. Marcell.

crucifixion, and afterwards durst own his mother, and keep her at his own house. But the nobility of his family, and especially that it should be such as to procure him so much respect from persons of the highest rank and quality, seems not reconcileable with the meanness of his father's trade, and the privacy of his fortunes. And for his acquaintance with the high-priest, I should rather put it upon some other account; especially if it be true what Nicephorus relates,^b that he had lately sold his estate, left by his father in Galilee, to Annas the high-priest, and had therewith purchased a fair house at Jerusalem, about Mount Sion, whence he became acquainted with him. Before his coming to Christ, he seems for some time to have been disciple to John the Baptist, being probably that "other disciple" that was with Andrew, when they left the Baptist to follow our Saviour; so particularly does he relate all circumstances of that transaction, though modestly, as in other parts of his gospel, concealing his his own name. He was, at the same time with his brother, called by our Lord both to the discipleship and apostolate, by far the youngest of all the apostles, as the ancients generally affirm and his great age seems to evince, living near seventy years after our Saviour's suffering.

II. There is not much said concerning him in the sacred story, more than what is recorded of him in conjunction with his brother James, which we have already remarked in his Life. He was peculiarly dear to his Lord and Master, being "the disciple whom Jesus loved," that is, treated with more freedom and familiarity than the rest. And, indeed, he was not only one of the three whom our Saviour made partakers of the private passages of his life, but had some instances of a more particular kindness and favour conferred upon him. Witness his lying in our Saviour's bosom at the paschal supper; it being the custom of those times to lie along at meals upon couches, so that the second lay with his head in the bosom of him that was before him: this honourable place was not given to any of the aged, but reserved for our apostle; nay, when Peter was desirous to know, which of them our Saviour meant, when he told them that one of them should betray him, and durst not himself propound the question, he made use of St. John (whose familiarity with

^b Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 28. vid. l. ii. c. 3. ubi hæreditatem hanc Caiphæ venditam fuisse dicit.

him might best warrant such an inquiry) to ask our Lord ; who thereupon made them understand, it was Judas whom he designed by the traitor. This favour our apostle endeavoured in some measure to answer by returns of particular kindness and constancy to our Saviour ; staying with him, when the rest deserted him. Indeed, upon our Lord's first apprehension, he fled after the other apostles, it not being without some probabilities of reason, that the ancients conceive him to have been that "young man"^c that followed after Christ, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body, whom when the officers laid hold upon, he left the linen cloth, and fled naked from them. This, in all likelihood, was that garment that he had cast about him at supper, (for they had peculiar vestments for that purpose ;) and being extremely affected with the treason, and our Lord's approaching Passion, had forgot to put on his other garments, but followed him into the garden in the same habit wherewith he arose from the table, it being then night, and so less liable to be taken notice of either by himself or others. But though he fled at present to avoid that sudden violence that was offered to him, yet he soon recovered himself, and returned back to seek his Master, confidently entered into the high-priest's hall, and followed our Lord through the several passages of his trial, and at last waited upon him (and, for any thing we know, was the only apostle that did so) at his execution ; owning him, as well as being owned by him, in the midst of arms and guards, and in the thickest crowds of his most inveterate enemies. Here it was that our Lord, by his last will and testament, made upon the cross, appointed him guardian of his own mother, the blessed Virgin :^d "When he saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he said unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son ;" see, here is one that shall supply my place, and be to thee instead of a son, to love and honour thee, to provide and take care for thee : "and to the disciple he said, Behold thy mother ;" her, whom thou shalt henceforth deal with, treat and observe with that duty and honourable regard which the relation of an indulgent mother challenges from a pious and obedient son : whereupon "he took her into his own house," her husband Joseph being some time since dead, and made her a principal part of his charge and care. And certainly the holy Jesus

^c Mark xiv. 51.

^d John xix. 26, 27.

could not have given a more honourable testimony of his particular respect and kindness to St. John, than to commit his own mother, whom of all earthly relations he held most dear and valuable, to his trust and care, and to substitute him to supply that duty which he himself paid her while he was here below.

III. At the first news of our Lord's return from the dead, he, accompanied with Peter, presently hasted to the sepulchre. Indeed there seems to have been a mutual intimacy between these two apostles, more than the rest. It was to Peter that St. John gave the notice of Christ's appearing, when he came to them at the sea of Tiberias in the habit of a stranger; and it was for John that Peter was so solicitously inquisitive to know what should become of him. After Christ's ascension, we find these two going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, and miraculously healing the poor impotent cripple: both preaching to the people, and both apprehended together by the priests and Sadducees, and thrown into prison, and the next day brought forth to plead their cause before the Sanhedrim. These were the two chosen by the apostles to send down to Samaria, to settle and confirm the plantations which Philip had made in those parts, where they confounded and baffled Simon the Magician, and set him in an hopeful way to repentance. To these St. Paul addressed himself, as those that seemed to be pillars among the rest, who accordingly "gave him the right hand of fellowship," and confirmed his mission to the Gentiles.

IV. In the division of provinces, which the apostles made among themselves, Asia fell to his share,* though he did not presently enter upon his charge, otherwise we must needs have heard of him in the account which St. Luke gives of St. Paul's several journeys into, and residence in those parts. Probable therefore it is, that he dwelt still in his own house at Jerusalem, at least till the death of the blessed Virgin, (and this is plainly asserted by Nicephorus,^f from the account of those historians that were before him,) whose death (says Eusebius^g) happened Ann. Chr. 48, about fifteen years after our Lord's ascension. Some time (probably years) after her death, he took his journey into Asia, and industriously applied himself to the propagating

* Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 1.

^f Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 42.

^g In Chron. ap. Bar. ad Ann. 48. n. 4.

Christianity, preaching where the gospel had not yet taken place, and confirming it where it was already planted. Many churches of note and eminency were of his foundation, Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and others; but his chief place of residence was at Ephesus, where St. Paul had, many years before, settled a church, and constituted Timothy bishop of it. Nor can we suppose that he confined his ministry merely to Asia Minor, but that he preached in other parts of the East; probably in Parthia, his first epistle being anciently entitled to them; and the Jesuits,^h in the relation of their success in those parts, assure us that the Bassoræ (a people of India) constantly affirm, from a tradition received from their ancestors, that St. John planted the Christian faith there.

V. Having spent many years in this employment, he was at length accused to Domitian, who had begun a persecution against the Christians, as an eminent assertor of atheism and impiety, and a public subverter of the religion of the empire. By his command, the proconsul of Asia sent him bound to Rome, where his treatment was what might be expected from so bloody and barbarous a prince; he was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, or rather oil set on fire.ⁱ But that Divine Providence that secured the three Hebrew captives in the flames of a burning furnace, brought this holy man out of this, one would have thought, unavoidable destruction: an instance of so signal preservation, as had been enough to persuade a considering man that there must be a divinity in that religion that had such mighty and solemn attestations. But miracles themselves will not convince him that is fallen under a hard heart and an injudicious mind. The cruel emperor was not satisfied with this, but presently orders him to be banished and transported into an island. This was accounted a kind of capital punishment, ἡ ἐπὶ τὴν νῆσον ἐξορία παρὰ Ῥωμαίοις κεφαλικὴν τιμωρίαν ἐμμείτο, says Pachymer,^k speaking of this very instance, where κεφαλικὴ τιμωρία is not to be understood as extending to life, but loss of privilege. Therefore this punishment, in the Roman laws, is called *capitis diminutio*,^l (and it was the second sort of it,)

^h Litter. Jesuit. Ann. 1555.

ⁱ Tertull. de Præscript. Hæret. c. 36.

^k Παραφρ. εἰς τὴν Ἐπιστ. ἱ. τοῦ Ἀγ. Διονυσ. p. 444.

^l Instit. l. i. tit. xvi. sect. 2. leg. 2. et 4. ff. de Pœn. l. xlviii. tit. xix. leg. 3. ad Leg. Jul. Pecul. ib. tit. xiii. vid. leg. 6. et 7. de Interd. et Rel. ib. tit. xxii.

because the person thus banished was disfranchised, and the city thereby lost a head. It succeeded in the room of that ancient punishment, *aqua et igni interdicere*, "to interdict a person the use of fire and water," the two great and necessary conveniences of man's life; whereby was tacitly implied, that he must, for his own defence, betake himself into banishment; it being unlawful for any to accommodate him with lodging or diet, or any thing necessary to the support of life. This banishing into islands was properly called *deportatio*, and was the worst and severest kind of exile, whereby the criminal forfeited his estate; and, being bound and put on shipboard, was by public officers transported into some certain island, (which none but the emperor himself might assign,) there to be confined to perpetual banishment. The place of our St. John's banishment was not Ephesus, as Chrysostom,^m by a great mistake, makes it, but Patmos, a disconsolate island in the Archipelago, where he remained several years, instructing the inhabitants in the faith of Christ. Here it was, about the latter end of Domitian's reign, (as Irenæus tells us,ⁿ) that he wrote his Apocalypse, or book of Revelations; wherein, by frequent visions and prophetic representations, he had a clear scheme and prospect of the state and condition of Christianity in the future periods and ages of the church: which certainly was not the least instance of that kindness and favour which our Lord particularly shewed to this apostle; and it seemed very suitable at this time, that the goodness of God should overpower the malice of men, and that he should be entertained with the more immediate converses of heaven, who was now cut off from all ordinary conversation and society with men. In a monastery of Caloires, or Greek monks, in this island, they shew a dead man's hand, at this day, the nails of whose fingers grow again as oft as they are pared;^o which the Turks will have to be one of their prophets, while the Greeks constantly affirm it to have been the hand of St. John, wherewith he wrote the Revelations; and, probably, both true alike.

VI. Domitian, whose prodigious wickedness had rendered him infamous and burthensome to the world, being taken out of the way, Cocceius Nerva succeeded in the empire: a prudent man, and of a milder and more sober temper. He rescinded the odious

^m Argum. Epist. ad Ephes.

ⁿ Adv. Hæres. l. v. c. 30.

^o Bellon. Observ. l. ii. c. 11.

acts of his predecessor, and by public edict recalled those from banishment whom the fury of Domitian had sent thither.^p St. John, taking the advantage of this general indulgence, left Patmos, and returned into Asia, his ancient charge, but chiefly fixed his seat at Ephesus, the care and presidency whereof (Timothy, their bishop, having been lately martyred by the people, for persuading them against their heathen feasts and sports, especially one called *Καταγάργιον*, wherein was a mixture of debauchery and idolatry) he took upon him, and, by the assistance of seven bishops, governed that large spacious diocese; Nicephorus adds,^q that he not only managed the affairs of the church, ordered and disposed the clergy, but erected churches, which surely must be meant of oratories^r and little places for their solemn conventions; building churches, in the modern notion, not being consistent with the poverty and persecution of Christians in those early times. Here, at the request of the bishops of Asia, he wrote his gospel, (they are authors of no credit and value, that make it written during his confinement in the isle of Patmos,) with very solemn preparation, whereof more when we come to consider the writings which he left behind him.

VII. He lived till the time of Trajan, about the beginning of whose reign he departed this life, very aged, about the ninety-eighth or ninety-ninth year of his life, as is generally thought. Chrysostom is very positive,^s that he was an hundred years old when he wrote his gospel, and that he lived full twenty years after. The same is affirmed by Dorotheus,^t that he lived one hundred and twenty years; which to me seems altogether improbable, seeing by this account he must be fifty years of age when called to be an apostle; a thing directly contrary to the whole consent and testimony of antiquity, which makes him very young at the time of his calling to the apostolic office. He died (says the Arabian^u) “in the expectation of his blessedness;” by which he means his quiet and peaceable departure, in opposition to a violent and bloody death. Indeed, Theophylact, and others before him, conceive him to have died a martyr, upon no other

^p Oros. l. vii. c. 11.

^q Martyr. Timoth. apud Phot. Cod. CCLIV. col. 1401—1404.

^r Lib. ii. c. 42.

^s Chrysost. Sermon. de S. Joan. Ap.

^t Synopsis. de vit. et mort. Apost. Bibl. patrum, vol. iii. p. 157. ed. 1575.

^u Apud Kirsten. de Vit. quat. Evang. p. 52.

ground, than what our Saviour told him and his brother, that they should drink of the cup, and be baptized with the baptism wherewith he was baptized ; which Chrysostom strictly understands of martyrdom and a bloody death.* It was indeed literally verified of his brother James ; and for him, though, as Jerome observes,^y he was not put to death, yet may he be truly styled a martyr, his being put into a vessel of boiling oil, his many years' banishment, and other sufferings in the cause of Christ, justly challenging that honourable title, though he did not actually lay down his life for the testimony of the gospel ; it being not want of good will either in him or his enemies, but the Divine Providence immediately overruling the powers of nature, that kept the malice of his enemies from its full execution.

VIII. Others, on the contrary, are so far from admitting him to die a martyr, that they question, nay peremptorily deny, that he ever died at all. The first assertor, and that but obliquely, that I find of this opinion, was Hippolytus, bishop of Porto, and scholar to Clemens of Alexandria, who ranks him in the same capacity with Enoch and Elias ; for, speaking of the twofold coming of Christ, he tells us,^z that his first coming in the flesh had John the Baptist for his forerunner, and his second to judgment shall have Enoch, Elias, and St. John. Ephrem, patriarch of Antioch, is more express : he tells us,^a there are three persons, answerable to the three dispensations of the word, yet in the body, Enoch, Elias, and St. John : Enoch before the law, Elias under the law, and St. John under the gospel ; concerning which last, that he never died, he confirms both from scripture and tradition, and quotes St. Cyril (I suppose he means him of Alexandria) as of the same opinion. The whole foundation upon which this error is built, was that discourse that passed between our Lord and Peter concerning this apostle :^b for Christ having told Peter what was to be his own fate, Peter inquires what should become of St. John, knowing him to be the disciple whom Jesus loved. Our Lord rebukes his curiosity, by asking him, what that concerned him ? “ If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee ? ” This the apostles misunderstood, and a report presently went out amongst them, “ that that disciple should not die : ” though St. John, who himself records the pas-

* Hom. lxvi. in Matt. c. xx.

^y Comm. in Matt. xx.

^z De Consumm. Mund. et Antichr. in Auctuar. Bibl. Patr. Gr. Lat. vol. ii. p. 351.

^a Apud Phot. Cod. CCXXIX. col. 797.

^b John xxi. 21—23.

sage, inserts a caution, "that Jesus did not say, he should not die," but only, "What if I will that he tarry till I come?" Which, doubtless, our Lord meant of his coming (so often mentioned in the New Testament) in judgment upon the Jews, at the final overthrow of Jerusalem, which St. John outlived many years; and which our Lord particularly intended, when elsewhere he told them,^c "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

IX. From the same original sprang the report, that he only lay sleeping in his grave. The story was current in St. Augustine's days, from whom we receive this account, though possibly the reader will smile at the conceit. He tells us,^d it was commonly reported and believed, that St. John was not dead, but that he rested like a man asleep in his grave at Ephesus; as plainly appeared from the dust sensibly boiling and bubbling up, which they accounted to be nothing else but the continual motion of his breath. This report St. Augustine seems inclinable to believe, having received it, as he tells us, from very credible hands. He farther adds, out of some apocryphal writings, what was generally known and reported, that when St. John, then in health, had caused his grave to be dug and prepared, he laid himself down in it as in a bed, and, as they thought, only fell asleep. Nicephorus relates the story more at large,^e from whom (if it may be any pleasure to entertain the reader with these things) we shall give this account. St. John, foreseeing his translation into heaven, took the presbyters and ministers of the church of Ephesus, and several of the faithful, along with him out of the city, carried them unto a cemetery near at hand, whither he himself was wont to retire to prayer, and very earnestly recommended the state of the churches to God in prayer: which being done, he commanded a grave to be immediately dug, and having instructed them in the more recondite mysteries of theology, the most excellent precepts of a good life, concerning faith, hope, and especially charity, confirmed them in the practice of religion, commended them to the care and blessing of our Saviour, and solemnly taking his leave of them, he signed himself with the sign of the cross, and before them all went down into the grave; strictly charging them to put on the gravestone, and to make it

^c Matt. xvi. 28.

^d Tract. cxxiv. in Joan. s. 2. vol. iii. par. ii. p. 819.

^e Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 42.

fast, and the next day to come and open it, and take a view of it. They did so, and having opened the sepulchre, found nothing there but the grave-clothes which he had left behind him. To all which let me add, while my hand is in these things, what Ephrem relates,^f that from this grave, wherein he rested so short a time, a kind of sacred oil or unguent was wont to be gathered. Gregory of Tours^g says it was manna ; which, even in his time, like flour, was cast up from the sepulchre, and was carried up and down the world for the curing of diseases. This report of our apostle's being yet alive, some men made use of to wild and fantastic purposes. Beza tells us of an impostor,^h in his time, (whom Postellus, who vainly boasted that he had the soul of Adam, was wont to call his brother,) who publicly professed himself to be our St. John, and was afterwards burnt at Toulouse in France. Nor was this any more than what was done in the more early ages of Christianity. For Sulpitius Severus,ⁱ giving us an account of a young Spaniard, that first professed himself to be Elias, and then Christ himself, adds, that there was one at the same time in the East, who gave out himself to be St. John. So fast will error, like circles in the water, multiply itself, and one mistaken place of scripture give countenance to an hundred stories that shall be built upon it. I have no more to add, but what we meet with in the Arabic writer of his Life,^k (though it little agrees with the preceding passages;) who reports, that there were none present at his burial but his disciple Phogsir, (probably Proghor or Prochorus, one of the seven deacons, and generally said to have been St. John's companion and assistant,) whom he strictly charged never to discover his sepulchre to any ; it may be for the same reason for which it is thought God concealed the body of Moses, to prevent the idolatrous worshipping of his relics : and accordingly the Turks, who conceit him to be buried in the confines of Lydia, pay great honour and veneration to his tomb.

X. St. John seems always to have led a single life, and so the ancients tell us ;^l nay, St. Ambrose positively affirms,^m that all

^f Apud Phot. Cod. CCXXIX. p. 800.

^g De Glor. Martyr. l. i. c. 30.

^h Annot. in Joan. c. 21.

ⁱ In vit. Martin. c. 25.

^k Apud Kirsten. de vit. quat. Evangel. p. 52.

^l Epiph. Hæres. lxxviii. c. 10. Hieron. adv. Jovin. l. i.

^m Ambr. Comm. in 2 Cor. xi.

the apostles were married, except St. John and St. Paul. There want not indeed some, and especially the middle writers of the church,ⁿ who will have our apostle to have been married, and that it was his marriage which our Lord was at in Cana of Galilee, invited thither upon the account of his consanguinity and alliance: but that being convinced by the miracle of the water turned into wine, he immediately quitted his conjugal relation, and became one of our Lord's disciples. But this, as Baronius himself confesses, is trifling, and the issue of fabulous invention; a thing wholly unknown to the fathers and best writers of the church, and which not only has no just authority to support it, but arguments enough to beat it down. As for his natural temper, he seems (as we have observed in his brother's Life) to have been of a more eager and resolute disposition, easily apt to be inflamed and provoked, which his reduced age brought to a more staid and a calmer temper. He was polished by no study or arts of learning; but what was wanting in that, was abundantly made up in the excellent temper and constitution of his mind, and that furniture of divine graces, which he was adorned withal. His humility was admirable, studiously concealing his own worth and honour; in all his epistles (as Eusebius long since observed^o) he never puts down the honourable titles of Apostle or Evangelist, but only styles himself, and that too but sometimes, Presbyter or Elder, alluding probably to his age, as much as office; in his gospel, when he speaks of "the disciple whom Jesus loved," he constantly conceals his own name, leaving the reader to conjecture who was meant. Love and charity he practised himself, and affectionately pressed upon others: our Lord's great love to him seems to have inspired his soul with a bigger and more generous charity than the rest. It is the great vein that runs through his writings, and especially his epistles, where he urges it as the great and peculiar law of Christianity, and without which all other pretences to Christian religion are vain and frivolous, useless and insignificant: and this was his constant practice to his dying day. When age and weakness grew upon him at Ephesus,^p that he was no longer able to preach to them,

ⁿ Bed. Præf. in Joan. Rupert. Tuit. Comm. in Joan. l. iii. in fin. Cyr. in Joan. c. ii. et alii.

^o Demonstr. Evangel. l. iii. p. 120.

^p Hieron. Comm. in c. vi. ad Galat.

he used at every public meeting to be led to the church, and say no more to them, than "Little children, love one another." And when his auditors, wearied with the constant repetition of the same thing, asked him why he always spoke the same, he answered, "Because it was the command of our Lord, and that if they did nothing else, this alone was enough."

XI. But the largest measures of his charity he expressed in the mighty care that he shewed to the souls of men, unweariedly spending himself in the service of the gospel, travelling from east to west to leaven the world with the principles of that holy religion which he was sent to propagate, patiently enduring all torments, breaking through all difficulties and discouragements, shunning no dangers, that he might do good to souls, redeem men's minds from error and idolatry, and reduce them from the snares of a debauched and a vicious life. Witness one famous instance.¹ In his visitation to the churches, near to Ephesus, he made choice of a young man, whom, with a special charge for his instruction and education, he committed to the bishop of that place. The spiritual man undertook the charge, instructed his pupil, and baptized him: and then thinking he might a little remit the reins of discipline, the youth made an ill use of his liberty, and was quickly debauched by bad companions, making himself captain to a company of highwaymen, the most loose, cruel, and profligate wretches of the country. St. John at his return understanding this, and sharply reproofing the negligence and unfaithfulness of his tutor, resolved to find him out: and without any consideration of what danger he entered upon, in venturing himself upon persons of desperate fortunes and forfeited consciences, he went to the mountains, where their usual haunt was; and being here taken by the sentinel, he desired to be brought before their commander, who no sooner espied him coming towards him, but immediately fled. The aged apostle followed after, but not able to overtake him, passionately entreated him to stay, promising him to undertake with God for his peace and pardon. He did so, and both melted into tears; and the apostle, having prayed with and for him, returned him a true penitent and convert to the church. This story we have elsewhere related more at large out of Eusebius,

¹ Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 23.

as he does from Clemens Alexandrinus,¹ since which that tract itself of Clemens is made public to the world.²

XII. Nor was it the least instance of his care of the church, and charity to the souls of men, that he was so infinitely vigilant against heretics and seducers, countermining their artifices, antidoting against the poison of their errors, and shunning all communion and conversation with their persons. Going along with some of his friends at Ephesus to the bath,³ (whither he used frequently to resort, and the ruins whereof, of porphyry, not far from the place where stood the famous temple of Diana, as a late eyewitness informs us,⁴ are still shewed at this day,) he inquired of the servant that waited there, who was within; the servant told him Cerinthus, (Epiphanius says it was Ebion, and it is not improbable that they might be both there,) which the apostle no sooner understood, but in great abhorrency he turned back; "Let us be gone, my brethren, (said he,) and make haste from this place, lest the bath wherein there is such an heretic as Cerinthus, the great enemy of the truth, fall upon our heads." This account Irenæus delivers from Polycarp, St. John's own scholar and disciple. This Cerinthus was a man of loose and pernicious principles, endeavouring to corrupt Christianity with many damnable errors.⁵ To make himself more considerable, he struck in with the Jewish converts, and made a bustle in that great controversy at Jerusalem, about circumcision and the observation of the law of Moses. But his usual haunt was Asia, where, amongst other things, he openly denied Christ's resurrection, affirmed the world to have been made by angels; broaching unheard-of dogmata, and pretending them to have been communicated to him by angels; venting revelations composed by himself, as a great apostle; affirming, that after the resurrection the reign of Christ would commence here upon earth; and that men, living again at Jerusalem, should, for the space of a thousand years, enjoy all manner of sensual pleasures and delights: hoping, by this fools' paradise, that he should tempt men of loose and

¹ Prim. Christ. par. iii. c. 2.

² Orat. περί τοῦ, τίς ὁ σωζόμενος πλούσιος. in Auctuar. Biblioth. Patr. Gr. Lat. a Fr. Combef. edit. Ann. 1672. par. i. p. 185. n. 42.

³ Iren. adv. Hæres. l. iii. c. 3. Euseb. l. iii. c. 28. Epiph. Hæres. xxx. c. 24.

⁴ Th. Smith. Epist. de septem. Asiæ Ecclea. p. 159.

⁵ Epiph. Hæres. xxviii. c. 6. Caius apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 28.

brutish minds over to his party. Much of the same stamp was Ebion,^y (though in some principles differing from him, as error agrees with itself as little as with truth,) who held that the holy Jesus was a mere and a mean man, begotten by Joseph of Mary his wife; and that the observance of the Mosaic rites and laws was necessary to salvation: and because they saw St. Paul stand so full in their way, they reproached him as an apostate from his religion, and rejected his epistles, owning none but St. Matthew's gospel in Hebrew, having little or no value for the rest: the sabbath and Jewish rites they observed with the Jews, and on the Lord's day celebrated the memory of our Lord's resurrection, according to the custom and practice of the Christians.

XIII. Besides these, there was another sort of heretics that infested the church in St. John's time, the Nicolaitans, mentioned by him in his Revelation,^z and whose doctrine our Lord is, with a particular emphasis, there said "to hate;" indeed, a most wretched and brutish sect, generally supposed to derive their original from Nicolas, one of the seven deacons whom we read of in the Acts, whereof Clemens of Alexandria gives this probable account.^a This Nicolas having a beautiful wife, and being reproved by the apostles for being jealous of her, to shew how far he was from it, brought her forth; and gave any, that would, leave to marry her; affirming this to be suitable to that saying, *ὅτι παραχρήσασθαι τῇ σαρκὶ δεῖ*, "that we ought to abuse the flesh." This speech, he tells us, was ascribed to St. Matthias, who taught that "we must fight with the flesh and abuse it," and, not allowing it any thing for pleasure, increase the soul by faith and knowledge. These words and actions of his, his disciples and followers misunderstanding, and perverting things to the worst sense imaginable, began to let loose the reins, and henceforwards to give themselves over to the greatest filthiness, the most shameless and impudent uncleanness; throwing down all inclosures, making the most promiscuous mixtures lawful, and pleasure the ultimate end and happiness of man. Such were their principles, such their practices; whereas Nicolas, their pretended patron and founder, was (says Clemens) a sober and a temperate man, never making use of any but his own wife, by whom he had one son and several daughters, who all lived in perpetual virginity.

^y Euseb. *ibid*.

^z Rev. ii. 15.

^a Stromat. l. iii. c. 4. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 29.

XIV. The last instance that we shall remark of our apostle's care for the good of the church, is the writings which he left to posterity: whereof the first in time, though placed last, is his Apocalypse, or book of Revelations, written while confined in Patmos. It was of old not only rejected by heretics, but controverted by many of the fathers themselves. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria,^b has a very large discourse concerning it: he tells us, that many plainly disowned this book, not only for the matter, but the author of it, as being neither apostle, no, nor any holy or ecclesiastical person; that Cerinthus prefixed St. John's name to it, to give the more plausible title to his dream of Christ's reign upon earth, and that sensual and carnal state that should attend it; that for his part he durst not reject it, looking upon it as containing wise and admirable mysteries, though he could not fathom and comprehend them; that he did not measure them by his own line, nor condemn, but rather admire what he could not understand; that he owned the author to have been an holy and divinely inspired person, but could not believe it to be St. John the apostle and evangelist, neither style, matter, nor method agreeing with his other writings; that in this he frequently names himself, which he never does in any other; that there were several Johns at that time, and two buried at Ephesus, the apostle and another, one of the disciples that dwelt in Asia, but which the author of this book, he leaves uncertain. But though doubted of by some, it was entertained by the far greater part of the ancients as the genuine work of our St. John. Nor could the setting down his name be any reasonable exception, for whatever he might do in his other writings, especially his gospel, where it was less necessary, historical matters depending not so much upon his authority, yet it was otherwise in prophetic revelations, where the person of the revealer adds great weight and moment, the reason why some of the prophets under the Old Testament did so frequently set down their own names. The diversity of the style is of no considerable value in this case, it being no wonder, if, in arguments so vastly different, the same person did not always observe the same tenor and way of writing; whereof there want not instances in some others of the apostolic order. The truth is, all circumstances concur to entitle our apostle to be the author of

^b Apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 25.

it: his name frequently expressed ; its being written in the island of Patmos, (a circumstance not compatible to any but St. John;) his styling himself "their brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ;" his writing particular epistles to the seven churches of Asia, all planted, or at least cultivated by him; the doctrine in it, suitable to the apostolic spirit and temper, evidently bearing witness in this case. That which seems to have given ground to doubt concerning both its author and authority, was its being long before it was usually joined with other books of the holy canon: for containing in it some passages directly levelled at Rome, the seat of the Roman empire, others which might be thought to symbolize with some Jewish dreams and figments, it might possibly seem fit to the prudence of those times for a while to suppress it. Nor is the conjecture of a learned man to be despised,^c who thinks that it might be entrusted in the keeping of John the Presbyter, scholar to our apostle, whence probably the report might arise, that he, who was only the keeper, was the author of it. I add no more, than that upon the account of this Apocalypse containing a prophetic scheme of the future state of the Christian church, he is in a strict sense a prophet, and has thereby one considerable addition to his titles, being not only an apostle and evangelist, but a prophet: an honour peculiar to himself. Peter was an apostle, but properly no evangelist; Mark an evangelist, but no apostle: St. Matthew an apostle and evangelist, but no prophet; but St. John was both an apostle, an evangelist, and a prophet.

XV. His gospel succeeds, written (say some^d) in Patmos, and published at Ephesus, but, as Irenæus and others, more truly,^e written by him after his return to Ephesus; composed at the earnest entreaty and solicitation of the Asian bishops, and ambassadors from several churches: in order whereunto he first caused them to proclaim a general fast, to seek the blessing of heaven on so great and solemn an undertaking; which being done, he set about it. And if we may believe the report of Gregory bishop of Tours,^f he tells us, that upon an hill near Ephesus there was a *proseucha*, or uncovered oratory, whither our apostle

^c Grot. Annot. in c. i. Joan.

^d Doroth. de vit. App. in B. Pp. vol. iii. p. 147.

^e Iren. adv. hæres. l. iii. c. 1. Hieron. præf. in. Matt. et de Script. Eccl. in Joan.

^f De Glor. Martyr. l. i. c. 30.

used often to retire for prayer and contemplation ; and where he obtained of God, that it might not rain in that place till he had finished his gospel : nay, he adds, that even in his time, no shower or storm ever came upon it. Two causes especially contributed to the writing of it : the one, that he might obviate the early heresies of those times, especially Ebion, Cerinthus, and the rest of that crew, who began openly to deny Christ's divinity, and that he had any existence before his incarnation ; the reason why our evangelist is so express and copious in that subject. The other was,^s that he might supply those passages of the evangelical history which the rest of the sacred writers had omitted. Collecting, therefore, the other three evangelists, he first set to his seal, ratifying the truth of them with his approbation and consent, and then added his own gospel to the rest ; principally insisting upon the acts of Christ, from the first commencing of his ministry to the death of John the Baptist, wherein the others are most defective, giving scarce any account of the first year of our Saviour's ministry, which therefore he made up in very large and particular narrations. He largely records (as Nazianzen observes^h) our Saviour's discourses, but takes little notice of his miracles ; probably, because so fully and particularly related by the rest. The subject of his writing is very sublime and mysterious ; mainly designing to prove Christ's divinity, eternal preexistence, creating of the world, &c. : upon which account Theodoret styles his gospel,ⁱ *θεολογίαν ἄβατον ἀνθρώποις καὶ ἀννπέρβατον*, "a theology which human understandings can never fully penetrate and find out." Thence generally by the ancients he is resembled to an eagle,^k soaring aloft within the clouds, whither the weak eye of man was unable to follow him ; hence peculiarly honoured with the title of "the divine," as if due to none but him, at least to him in a more eminent and extraordinary manner. Nay, the very Gentile philosophers themselves could not but admire his writings : witness Amelius the famous Platonist,^l and regent of Porphyry's school at Alex-

^s Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 24.

^h Naz. Carm. xli. vol. ii. p. 102.

ⁱ Comm. in Ezech. c. 47.

^k Nemo, audeo dicere, tanta sublimitate sapientiæ majestatem Dei vidit, et nobis proprio sermone reservavit. Transcendit nubes, transcendit virtutes cælorum, transcendit angelos, et verbum in principio reperit, et apud Deum vidit. Ambr. præf. Comm. in Luc.

^l Amel. apud Euseb. præpar. Evang. l. xi. p. 540. Vid. Theod. de Cur. Græc. Affect. Serm. ii. p. 33.

andria; who, quoting a passage out of the beginning of St. John's gospel, swore by Jupiter, that this Barbarian (so the proud Greeks counted and called all that differed from them) "had hit upon the right notion, when he affirmed, that the Word that made all things was in the beginning, and in place of prime dignity and authority with God, and was that God that created all things, in whom every thing that was made had, according to its nature, its life and being; that he was incarnate and clothed with a body, wherein he manifested the glory and magnificence of his nature; that after his death he returned to the repossession of divinity, and became the same God which he was before his assuming a body, and taking the human nature and flesh upon him." I have no more to observe, but that his gospel was afterwards translated into Hebrew,^m and kept by the Jews, *ἐν ἀποκρύφους*, among their secret archives and records in their treasury at Tiberias; where a copy of it was found by one Joseph, a Jew,ⁿ afterwards converted, and whom Constantine the Great advanced to the honour of a count of the empire; who breaking open the treasury, though he missed of money, found *βιβλους τὰς ὑπὲρ χρήματα*, "books beyond all treasure," St. Matthew and St. John's gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles, in Hebrew; the reading whereof greatly contributed towards his conversion.

XVI. Besides these, our apostle wrote three epistles; the first whereof is catholic, calculated for all times and places, containing most excellent rules for the conduct of the Christian life, pressing to holiness and purity of manners, and not to rest in a naked and empty profession of religion, not to be led away with the crafty insinuations of seducers; antidoting men against the poison of the Gnostic principles and practices, to whom it is not to be doubted, but that the apostle had a more particular respect in this epistle. According to his wonted modesty, he conceals his name; it being of more concernment with wise men, what it is that is said, than who it is that says it. And this epistle, Eusebius tells us,^o was universally received, and never questioned by any; anciently, as appears by St. Augustine,^p inscribed to the Parthians, though for what reason I am yet to learn, unless (as we hinted before) it was, because he himself had

^m Epiph. Hæres. xxx. c. 3.

ⁿ Ibid. c. 6.

^o Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 25.

^p Quæst. Evang. l. ii. c. 39. Vid. Possid. Indic. Oper. August.

heretofore preached in those parts of the world. The other two epistles are but short, and directed to particular persons; the one a lady of honorable quality, the other the charitable and hospitable Gaius, so kind a friend, so courteous an entertainer of all indigent Christians. These epistles, indeed, were not of old admitted into the canon,^a nor are owned by the church in Syria at this day; ascribed by many to the younger John, disciple to our apostle. But there is no just cause to question who was their father, seeing both the doctrine, phrase, and design of them do sufficiently challenge our apostle for their author. These are all the books wherein it pleased the Holy Spirit to make use of St. John for its penman and secretary; in the composure whereof, though his style and character be not florid and elegant, yet is it grave and simple, short and perspicuous. Dionysius of Alexandria tells us, that in his gospel and first epistle his phrase is more neat and elegant, there being an accuracy in the contexture, both of words and matter, that runs through all the reasonings of his discourses; but that in the Apocalypse, the style is nothing so pure and clear, being frequently mixed with more barbarous and improper phrases. Indeed, his Greek generally abounds with Syriasms, his discourses many times abrupt, set off with frequent antitheses, connected with copulatives, passages often repeated; things at first more obscurely propounded, and which he is forced to enlighten with subsequent explications, words peculiar to himself, and phrases used in an uncommon sense: all which concur to render his way of writing less grateful, possibly, to the masters of eloquence, and an elaborate curiosity. St. Jerome observes,^r that in citing places out of the Old Testament, he more immediately translates from the Hebrew original, studying to render things word for word; for being an Hebrew of the Hebrews, admirably skilled in the language of his country, it probably made him less exact in his Greek composures, wherein he had very little advantage besides what was immediately communicated from above. But whatever was wanting in the politeness of his style, was abundantly made up in the zeal of his temper, and the excellency and sublimity of his matter; he truly answered his name, Boanerges, spake and writ like a "son of thunder:" whence it is that his writings,

^a Euseb. l. vii. c. 25 et 26. Hieron. de script. Eccl. in Joan.

^r Comm. in c. xii. Zachar.

but especially his gospel, have such great and honorable things spoken of them by the ancients. "The evangelical writings (says St. Basil^a) transcend the other parts of the holy volumes: in other parts God speaks to us by servants, the prophets; but in the gospels our Lord himself speaks to us, αὐτοῦγε μὲν τοῦ εὐαγγελικοῦ κηρύγματος ὁ μεγαλοφωνότατος, καὶ πάσης μὲν ἀκοῆς μείζονα, πάσης δὲ διανοίας ὑψηλότερα φθεγξάμενος, Ἰωάννης ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τῆς βροντῆς, but among all the evangelical preachers, none like St. John, the son of thunder, for the sublimeness of his speech, and the height of his discourses beyond any man's capacity duly to reach and comprehend." "St. John, as a true son of thunder, (says Epiphanius,^b) τῇ οἰκειᾷ μεγαλοφωνίᾳ, ὥσπερ ἐκ τίνων νεφελῶν, τῶν καὶ σοφίας αἰνιγμάτων τὴν εὐσεβῇ ἡμῖν ἔννοιαν τοῦ υἱοῦ ἀνήκεν, by a certain greatness of speech, peculiar to himself, does as it were out of the clouds and the dark recesses of wisdom acquaint us with divine doctrines concerning the Son of God." To which let me add, what St. Cyril of Alexandria," among other things, says concerning him: "that whoever looks εἰς τε τὸ τῶν θεωρημάτων ὑπερφερές, καὶ τῆς διανοίας αὐτοῦ τὴν ὀξύτητα, καὶ τὴν συνεχῇ, καὶ ἀλλεπάλληλον τῶν νοημάτων ἐπισφοράν: to the sublimity of his incomprehensible notions, the acumen and sharpness of his reason, and the quick inferences of his discourses constantly succeeding and following upon one another, must needs confess, that his gospel perfectly exceeds all admiration."

^a Homil. xvi. vol. i. p. 502. ed. 1638.

^b Hæres. lxxiii. c. 7.

^c Comm. in Joan. p. 8.

THE LIFE OF SAINT PHILIP.

Galilee generally despised by the Jews, and why. The honour which our Lord put upon it. St. Philip's birth-place. His being first called to be a disciple, and the manner of it. An account of his ready obedience to Christ's call. What the evangelists relate concerning him considered. The discourse between our Lord and him concerning the knowledge of the Father. His preaching the gospel in the Upper Asia, and the happy effects of his ministry. His coming to Hierapolis in Phrygia, and successful confutation of their idolatries. The rage and fury of the magistrates against him. His martyrdom, crucifixion, and burial. His married condition. The confounding him with Philip the Deacon. The gospel forged by the Gnostics under his name.

OF all parts of Palestine, Galilee seems to have passed under the greatest character of ignominy and reproach. The country itself, because bordering upon the idolatrous uncircumcised nations, called Galilee of the Gentiles; the people generally beheld as more rude and boisterous, more unpolished and barbarous than the rest, not remarkable either for civility or religion. "The Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast, for they also went up unto the feast,"^a as if it had been a wonder, and a matter of very strange remark, to see so much devotion in them as to attend the solemnity of the Passover. Indeed, both Jew and Gentile conspired in this, that they thought they could not fix a greater title of reproach upon our Saviour and his followers, than that of Galilean: "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"^b a city in this province, said Nathanael concerning Christ. "Search and look, (say the Pharisees,) for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet;"^c as if nothing but briars and thorns could grow in that soil. But there needs no more to confute this ill-natured opinion, than that our Lord not only made choice of it as the seat of his ordinary residence and retreat, but that hence he chose those excellent persons, whom he made his apostles, the great instruments to convert the

^a John iv. 45.

^b John i. 46.

^c John vii. 52.

world. Some of these we have already given an account of, and more are yet behind.

II. Of this number was St. Philip, born at Bethsaida, a town near the sea of Tiberias, the city of Andrew and Peter. Of his parents and way of life the history of the gospel takes no notice, though probably he was a fisherman, the trade general of that place. He had the *τὰ πρωτεῖα*, the honour of being first called to the discipleship, which thus came to pass. Our Lord, soon after his return from the wilderness, having met with Andrew and his brother Peter, after some short discourse parted from them: and the very next day, as he was passing through Galilee, he found Philip,^d whom he presently commanded to follow him; the constant form which he used in making choice of his disciples, and those that did inseparably attend upon him. So that the *πρωτοκλησία*, or “prerogative” of being first called, evidently belongs to Philip, he being the first-fruits of our Lord’s disciples. For though Andrew and Peter were the first that came to, and conversed with Christ, yet did they immediately return to their trade again, and were not called to the discipleship till above a whole year after, when John was cast into prison. Clemens Alexandrinus tells us,^e that it was Philip to whom our Lord said, (when he would have excused himself at present, that he must go bury his father,) “Let the dead bury their dead, but follow thou me.” But besides that he gives no account whence he derived this intelligence, it is plainly inconsistent with the time of our apostle’s call, who was called to be a disciple a long time before that speech and passage of our Saviour. It may seem justly strange, that Philip should at first sight so readily comply with our Lord’s command, and turn himself over into his service, having not yet seen any miracle that might evince his Messiahship and divine commission, nor probably so much as heard any tidings of his appearance; and especially being a Galilean, and so of a more rustic and unyielding temper. But it cannot be doubted but that he was admirably versed in the writings of Moses and the prophets. Metaphrastes assures us,^f (though how he came to know it otherwise than by conjecture, I cannot imagine,) that from his childhood he had excellent education, that he frequently read over Moses’s books, and considered the prophecies that related to our Saviour; and

^d John i. 44.

^e Stromat. l. iii. c. 4.

^f Apud Sur. ad diem 1 Maii.

was, no question, awakened with the general expectations that were then on foot among the Jews, (the date of the prophetic scriptures concerning the time of Christ's coming being now run out,) that the Messiah would immediately appear. Add to this, that the divine grace did more immediately accompany the command of Christ, to incline and dispose him to believe, that this person was that very Messiah that was to come.

III. No sooner had religion taken possession of his mind, but, like an active principle, it began to ferment and diffuse itself. Away he goes, and finds Nathanael, a person of note and eminency, acquaints him with the tidings of the new-found Messiah, and conducts him to him. So forward is a good man to draw and direct others in the same way to happiness with himself. After his call to the apostleship much is not recorded of him in the holy story: it was to him that our Saviour propounded the question,^g What they should do for so much bread in the wilderness, as would feed so vast a multitude? to which he answered, That so much was not easily to be had; not considering, that to feed two or twenty thousand are equally easy to Almighty power, when pleased to exert itself. It was to him that the Gentile proselytes that came up to the Passover addressed themselves,^h when desirous to see our Saviour, a person of whom they had heard so loud a fame. It was with him that our Lord had that discourse concerning himself a little before the last paschal supper. The holy and compassionate Jesus had been fortifying their minds with fit considerations against his departure from them; had told them, that he was going to prepare room for them in the mansions of the blessed; that he himself was "the way, the truth, and the life, and that no man could come to the Father but by him;" and that knowing him, "they both knew and had seen the Father."ⁱ Philip, not duly understanding the force of our Saviour's reasonings, begged of him that he would "shew them the Father," and then this would abundantly convince and satisfy them. We can hardly suppose he should have such gross conceptions of the Deity, as to imagine the Father vested with a corporeal and visible nature; but Christ having told them that they had seen him, and he knowing that God of old was wont frequently to appear in a visible shape, he only desired that he

^g John vi. 5.

^h John xii. 21.

ⁱ John xiv. 6—8.

would manifest himself to them by some such appearance. Our Lord gently reproved his ignorance, that, after so long attendance upon his instructions, he should not know that he was the image of his Father, the express characters of his infinite wisdom, power, and goodness appearing in him; that he said and did nothing but by his Father's appointment, which, if they did not believe, his miracles were a sufficient evidence: that therefore such demands were unnecessary and impertinent, and that it argued great weakness, after more than three years' education under his discipline and institution, to be so unskilful in those matters. God expects improvement according to men's opportunities: to be old and ignorant in the school of Christ deserves both reproach and punishment; it is the character of very bad persons, that "they are ever learning, but never come to the knowledge of the truth."^k

IV. In the distribution of the several regions of the world made by the apostles, though no mention be made by Origen or Eusebius what part fell to our apostle, yet we are told by others,¹ that the Upper Asia was his province, (the reason doubtless why he is said by many to have preached and planted Christianity in Scythia,) where he applied himself with an indefatigable diligence and industry to recover men out of the snare of the devil, to the embracing and acknowledgment of the truth. By the constancy of his preaching, and the efficacy of his miracles, he gained numerous converts, whom he baptized into the Christian faith, at once curing both souls and bodies; their souls of error and idolatry, their bodies of infirmities and distempers; healing diseases, dispossessing demons, settling churches, and appointing them guides and ministers of religion.

V. Having for many years successfully managed his apostolical office in all those parts, he came in the last periods of his life to Hierapolis in Phrygia; a city rich and populous, but answering its name in its idolatrous devotions.^m Amongst the many vain and trifling deities, to whom they paid religious adoration, was a serpent, or dragon, (in memory, no doubt, of that infamous act of Jupiter, who, in the shape of a dragon, insinuated

^k 1 Tim. iii. 7.

¹ S. Metaphr. Comm. de S. Philip. apud Sur. ad 1 Maii. Niceph. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 39.

^m Metaphr. et Niceph. *ibid*.

himself into the embraces of Proserpina, his own daughter begot of Ceres, and whom these Phrygians chiefly worshipped, as Clemens Alexandrinus tells us ;ⁿ so little reason had Baronius to say that they worshipped no such god,^o) of a more prodigious bigness than the rest, which they worshipped with great and solemn veneration. St. Philip was troubled to see the people so wretchedly enslaved to error, and therefore continually solicited heaven, till, by prayer and calling upon the name of Christ, he had procured the death, or at least vanishing of this famed and beloved serpent : which done, he told them, how unbecoming it was to give divine honours to such odious creatures ; that God alone was to be worshipped as the great parent of the world, who had made man at first after his own glorious image, and when fallen from that innocent and happy state, had sent his own Son into the world to redeem him ; who died, and rose from the dead, and shall come again at the last day, to raise men out of their graves, and to sentence and reward them according to their works. The success was, that the people were ashamed of their fond idolatry, and many broke loose from their chains of darkness, and ran over to Christianity. Whereupon, the great enemy of mankind betook himself to his old methods, cruelty and persecution. The magistrates of the city seized the apostle, and having put him into prison, caused him to be severely whipped and scourged. This preparatory cruelty passed, he was led to execution ; and being bound, was hanged up by the neck against a pillar, though others tell us that he was crucified. We are farther told, that at his execution the earth began suddenly to quake, and the ground whereon the people stood to sink under them ; which when they apprehended and bewailed as an evident act of divine vengeance pursuing them for their sins, it as suddenly stopped, and went no farther. The apostle being dead, his body was taken down by St. Bartholomew, his fellow-sufferer, though not finally executed, and Mariamne, St. Philip's sister, who is said to have been the constant companion of his travels, and decently buried ; after which, having confirmed the people in the faith of Christ, they departed from them.

VI. That St. Philip was married, is generally affirmed by the ancients ; Clemens of Alexandria^p reckons him one of the

ⁿ Admonit. ad Gent. c. 2.

^o Ad Ann. 54. n. 3.

^p Strom. l. iii. p. 448.

married apostles, and that he had daughters, whom he disposed in marriage: Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, tells us,^q that Philip, one of the twelve apostles, died at Hierapolis, with two of his daughters, who persevered in their virginity; and that he had a third which died at Ephesus. The truth is, the not careful distinguishing between Philip the Deacon (who lived at Cæsarea, and of whose four virgin-daughters we read in the history of the Apostles' Acts^r) and our apostle, has bred some confusion among the ancients in this matter;^s nay, has made some conclude them to have been but one and the same person. But with how little reason, will appear to any one that shall consider, that Philip, who was chosen to be one of the seven deacons, could not be one of the apostolical college, the apostles declaring upon that occasion, that they had affairs of a higher nature to attend upon:^t "then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, it is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables; wherefore look ye out among you seven men of honest report, &c.; and they chose Stephen and Philip," &c.; *among you*, the body of the people, not from among the apostles. So when, upon the persecution that arose upon Stephen's death, the church was dispersed, "they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria," (and Philip the Deacon among the rest, who went down to the city of Samaria,) except the apostles," who tarried behind at Jerusalem. And when Philip had converted and baptized considerable numbers in that place, he was forced to send for two of the apostles from Jerusalem, that so by apostolic hands they might be confirmed, and might "receive the Holy Ghost:" which had been wholly needless, had Philip himself been of the twelve apostles. But it is needless to argue in this matter, the account concerning them being so widely different; for as they differed in their persons and offices, the one a deacon, the other an apostle, so also in the number of their children; four daughters being ascribed to the one, while three only are attributed to the other. He was one of the apostles who left no sacred writings behind him, the greater part of the apostles

^q Ap. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 31. Vid. Doroth. Synops. de vit. et mort. Apost. Bibl. patr. vol. iii. p. 148.

^r Acts xxi. 8, 9.

^s Vid. Isid. Pelus. l. i. epist. 447—450.

^t Acts vi. 2, 3, etc.

^u Acts viii. 1, etc.

(as Eusebius observes^{*}) having little leisure to write books, being employed in ministries more immediately useful and subservient to the happiness of mankind: though Epiphanius tells us,[†] that the Gnostics were wont to produce a gospel forged under St. Philip's name, which they abused to the patronage of their horrible principles, and more brutish practices.

^{*} Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 24.

[†] Hæres. xxvi. c. 13.

THE LIFE OF SAINT BARTHOLOMEW.

The silence concerning this apostle in the history of the gospel. That he is the same with Nathanael, proved by many probable arguments. His title of Bar-tholmai, whence. The school of the Tholmæans. An objection against his being Nathanael answered. His descent, and way of life. His first coming to Christ, and converse with him. In what parts of the world he planted the Christian faith. His preaching in India, and leaving St. Matthew's gospel there. His return to Hierapolis, and deliverance there from crucifixion. His removal to Albanopolis in Armenia, and suffering martyrdom there for the faith of Christ. His being first flayed alive, and then crucified. The fabulous gospel attributed to him. A saying of his recorded by Dionysius Areopagita,

THAT St. Bartholomew was one of the twelve apostles, the evangelical history is most express and clear, though it seems to take no farther notice of him than the bare mention of his name ; which doubtless gave the first occasion to many, both anciently and of later time, not without reason to suppose, that he lies concealed under some other name, and that this can be no other than Nathanael, one of the first disciples that came to Christ. Accordingly, we may observe, that as St. John never mentions Bartholomew in the number of the apostles, so the other evangelists never take notice of Nathanael, probably because the same person under two several names : and as in John, Philip and Nathanael are joined together in their coming to Christ, so in the rest of the evangelists, Philip and Bartholomew are constantly put together, without the least variation ; for no other reason, I conceive, than because they were jointly called to the discipleship, so they are jointly referred in the apostolic catalogue, as afterwards we find them joint companions in the writings of the church. But that which renders the thing most specious and probable is, that we find Nathanael particularly reckoned up with the other apostles to whom our Lord appeared

at the sea of Tiberias after his resurrection;^a where there were together, Simon Peter, and Thomas, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the two sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples, who probably were Andrew and Philip. That by disciples is here meant apostles, is evident, partly from the names of those that are reckoned up, partly because it is said,^b that "this was the third time that Jesus appeared to his disciples;" it being plain, that the two foregoing appearances were made to none but the apostles.

II. Had he been no more than an ordinary disciple, I think no tolerable reason can be given, why, in filling up the vacancy made by the death of Judas, he, being so eminently qualified for the place, should not have been propounded, as well as either Barsabas or Matthias, but that he was one of the twelve already. Nor indeed is it reasonable to suppose that Bartholomew should be his proper name, any more than Bar-jona the proper name of Peter, importing no more than a relative capacity, either as a son or a scholar. As a son, it notes no more than his being בר חולמי, "the son of Tholmai," a name not uncommon amongst the Jews, it being customary among them for the son thus to derive his name, so "Bar-jona, Bartimeus, the son of Timeus," &c. and to be usually called rather by this relative, than his own proper name; thus Joseph was called Barsabas; thus Barnabas constantly so styled, though his right name was Joses: or else it may relate to him as a disciple of some particular sect and institution among the Jews, it being a custom for scholars, out of a great reverence for their masters, or first institutors of that way, to adopt their names, as Ben-ezra, Ben-uziel, &c. And this will be much more evident, if the observation which one makes be true,^c (which yet I will not contend for,) that as several sects in the Jewish church denominated themselves from some famous person of that nation, the Essenes from Enosh, the Sadducees from Sadoc, so there were others that called themselves Tholmæans, from Tholmai, scholar to Heber, the ancient master of the Hebrews, who was of the race or institution of the Enakim, who flourished in Debir and Hebron, with whom Abraham was confederate, that is, joined himself to their society: and of this

^a John xxi. 1, 2.

^b John xxi. 14.

^c Bolduc. de Eccles. post. Leg. c. 7. Vid. de Eccl. ante Leg. l. ii. c. 8.

order and institution, he tells us, Nathanael seems to have been, hence called Bartholomew, the son or scholar of the Tholmæans; hence said to be "an Israelite indeed," that is, one of the ancient race of the schools and societies of Israel. This, if so, would give us an account of his skill and ability in the Jewish law, wherein he is generally supposed to have been a doctor or teacher. But which soever of these two accounts of his denomination shall find most favour with the reader, either of them will serve my purpose, and reconcile the difference that seems to be between St. John and the other evangelists about his name, the one styling him by his proper name, the other by his relative and paternal title. To all this, if necessary, I might add the consent of learned men, who have given in their suffrages in this matter, that it is but the same person under several names.^d But hints of this may suffice. These arguments, I confess, are not so forcible and convictive as to command assent, but, with all their circumstances considered, are sufficient to incline and sway any man's belief. The great, and indeed only reason brought against it, is, what St. Augustine objected of old,^e that it is not probable that our Lord would choose Nathanael, a doctor of the law, to be one of his apostles, as designing to confound the wisdom of the world by the preaching of the idiot and the unlearned. But this is no reason to him that considers that this objection equally lies against St. Philip, for whose skill in the law and prophets there is as much evidence in the history of the gospel, as for Nathanael's; and much stronglier against St. Paul, than whom (besides his abilities in all human learning) there were few greater masters in the Jewish law.

III. This difficulty being cleared, we proceed to a more particular account of our apostle. By some he is thought to have been a Syrian, of a noble extract, and to have derived his pedigree from the Ptolemies of Egypt, upon no other ground, I believe, than the mere analogy and sound of the name. It is plain, that he, as the rest of the apostles, was a Galilean: and of Nathanael we know it is particularly said, that he was of Cana in Galilee. The scripture takes no notice of his trade or way of life, though some circumstances might seem to intimate that he

^d Rupert. Tuit. Comm. in Joan. i. Jansen. Concord. c. 17. Onuphr. in Fast. Salmer. Tract. xviii. vol. iv. Montac. Orig. Sacr. par. ii. p. 18. Dr. H. Annot. in Joh. i. aliique.

^e Tract. vii. in Joan. s. 17. vol. iii. par. ii. p. 349. et in Psal. lxy. s. 4. vol. iv. p. 642.

was a fisherman, which Theodoret affirms of the apostles in general, and another particularly reports of our apostle. At his first coming to Christ (supposing him still the same with Nathanael) he was conducted by Philip, who told him that now they had found the long-looked-for Messiah, so oft foretold by Moses and the prophets, "Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph:"[†] and when he objected, that the Messiah could not be born at Nazareth, Philip bids him come and satisfy himself. At his first approach, our Lord entertains him with this honourable character, that he was "an Israelite indeed," a man of true simplicity and integrity; as, indeed, his simplicity particularly appears in this, that when told of Jesus, he did not object against the meanness of his original, the low condition of his parents, the narrowness of their fortunes, but only against the place of his birth, which could not be Nazareth, the prophets having peremptorily foretold, that the Messiah should be born at Bethlehem. By this, therefore, he appeared to be a true Israelite, one that "waited for redemption in Israel:" which, from the date of the scripture predictions, he was assured did now draw nigh. Surprised he was at our Lord's salutation, wondering how he should know him so well at first sight, whose face he had never seen before: but he was answered, that he had seen him while he was yet under the fig tree, before Philip called him. Convinced with this instance of our Lord's divinity, he presently made this confession; that now he was sure, that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Son of God, whom he had appointed to be the King and Governor of his church. Our Saviour told him, that if upon this inducement he could believe him to be the Messiah, he should have far greater arguments to confirm his faith; yea, that ere long he should behold the heavens opened to receive him thither, and the angels visibly appearing to wait and attend upon him.

IV. Concerning our apostle's travels up and down the world to propagate the Christian faith, we shall present the reader with a brief account, though we cannot warrant the exact order of them. That he went as far as India, is owned by all, which surely is meant of the hither India, or the part of it lying next to Asia: Socrates tells us,[§] it was the India bordering upon Ethiopia, meaning, no doubt, the Asian Ethiopia, (whereof we shall speak in the Life of St. Thomas;) Sophronius calls it the Fortunate India,

[†] John i. 45.

[§] Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 19.

and tells us,^h that here he left behind him St. Matthew's gospel, whereof Eusebius gives a more particular relation:ⁱ that when Pantænus, a man famous for his skill in philosophy, and especially the institutions of the Stoics, but much more for his hearty affection to Christianity, in a devout and zealous imitation of the apostles, was inflamed with a desire to propagate the Christian religion unto the eastern countries, he came as far as India itself. Here, amongst some that yet retained the knowledge of Christ, he found St. Matthew's gospel, written in Hebrew, left here (as the tradition was) by St. Bartholomew, one of the twelve apostles, when he preached the gospel to these nations.

V. After his labours in these parts of the world, he returned to the more western and northern parts of Asia. At Hierapolis in Phrygia we find him in company with St. Philip, instructing that place in the principles of Christianity, and convincing them of the folly of their blind idolatries. Here, by the enraged magistrates, he was, at the same time with Philip, designed for martyrdom; in order whereunto he was fastened upon the cross, with an intent to despatch him; but upon a sudden conviction that the divine justice would revenge their death, he was taken down again and dismissed. Hence, probably, he went into Lycaonia, the people whereof, Chrysostom assures us,^k he instructed and trained up in the Christian discipline. His last remove was to Albanople, in Armenia the Great,^l (the same no doubt which Nicephorus calls Urbanople,^m a city of Cilicia,) a place miserably overgrown with idolatry; from which while he sought to reclaim the people, he was by the governor of the place commanded to be crucified; which he cheerfully underwent, comforting and confirming the convert Gentiles to the last minute of his life. Some add,ⁿ that he was crucified with his head downwards; others that he was flayed, and his skin first taken off; which might consist well enough with his crucifixion; excoriation being a punishment in use, not only in Egypt, but amongst the Persians, next neighbours to these Armenians, (as Ammianus Marcellinus assures us,^o and Plutarch^p records a particular instance of Mesa-

^h Apud Hier. de Script. Eccl. in Barthol.

ⁱ Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. 10.

^k Serm. in SS. xii. App. vol. viii. p. 11. inter spuria.

^l Sophron. ap. Hieron. in Barth.

^m Lib. ii. c. 39. vid. Metaphr. ad Aug. 24.

ⁿ Hippol. de App. ap. Bar. in Not. ad Martyr. ad Aug. 25. Isid. de SS. utriusque T. c. 77.

^o Am. Marcell. l. xxviii. c. 6.

^p In vit. Artaxerx. p. 1019. Vid. Greg. Turon. de glor. Martyr. l. i. c. 34.

bates, the Persian eunuch, first flayed alive and then crucified,) from whom they might easily borrow this piece of barbarous and inhuman cruelty. As for the several stages to which his body removed after his death, first to Daras, a city in the borders of Persia, then to Liparis, one of the Æolian islands, thence to Beneventum in Italy, and last of all to Rome, they that are fond of those things, and have better leisure, may inquire. Heretics persecuted his memory after his death, no less than heathens did his person while alive, by forging and fathering a fabulous gospel upon his name; which, together with others of like stamp, Gelasius,^q bishop of Rome, justly branded as apocryphal, altogether unworthy the name and patronage of an apostle. And, perhaps, of no better authority is the sentence which Dionysius,^r the pretended Areopagite, records of our apostle: *καὶ ἐπολλὴν τὴν θεολογίαν εἶναι, καὶ ἐλαχίστην. Καὶ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον πλατὺ καὶ μέγα, καὶ αὐθις συντετμημένον*: “that theology is both copious, and yet very small; and the gospel diffuse and large, and yet withal concise and short;” which he, according to his vein, expounds concerning the boundless benignity, but withal incomprehensibleness, of the divine nature, which is *βραχύλεκτος ἄμα, καὶ ἄλογος*, “quickly despatched, because ineffable,” and is not without the vail discoverable to any, but those that have got above not only all sense and matter, but above all sense and understanding, that is, to the very height of mystical and intelligible religion.

^q Decret. par. i. distinct. 15. c. 3. sect. Cæterum.

^r De Mystic. Theol. c. 1. a. 3.

THE LIFE OF SAINT MATTHEW.

His birthplace and kindred. His trade the office of a publican. The great dignity of this office among the Romans. The honours done to Vespasian's father for the faithful discharge of it. This office infamous among the Greeks, but especially the Jews. What things concurred to render it odious and grievous to them. Their bitter abhorrence of this sort of men. St. Matthew's employment, wherein it particularly consisted. The publican's ticket, what. St. Matthew's call, and his ready obedience. His inviting our Lord to dinner. The Pharisees' cavi, and our Saviour's answer. His preaching in Judea. His travels into Parthia, Ethiopia, &c. to propagate Christianity. The success of his ministry. His death. His singular contempt of the world. Censured herein by Julian and Porphyry. His exemplary temperance and sobriety. His humility and modesty. Unreasonable to reproach penitents with the vices of their former life. His gospel, when and why written. Composed by him in Hebrew. The general consent of antiquity herein. Its translation into Greek, when and by whom. The Hebrew copy, by whom owned and interpolated. Those now extant not the same with those mentioned in antiquity.

ST. MATTHEW, called also Levi, was, though a Roman officer, an Hebrew of the Hebrews, (both his names speaking him purely of Jewish extract and original,) and probably a Galilean, and whom I should have concluded born at or near Capernaum, but that the Arabic writer of his Life tells us,^a he was born at Nazareth, a city in the tribe of Zebulun, famous for the habitation of Joseph and Mary, but especially the education and residence of our blessed Saviour; who, though born at Bethlehem, was both conceived and bred up here, where he lived the whole time of his private life, whence he derived the title of Jesus of Nazareth. St. Matthew was the son of Alpheus and Mary, sister or kinswoman to the blessed Virgin; in the same Arabic author his father is called Ducu, and his mother Karutias, both originally descended of the tribe of Issachar, nothing being more common among the Jews than for the same person to have several names,

^a Apud Kirsten. Vit. 4. Evangel. p. 22.

these latter probably expressed in Arabic according to their Jewish signification. His trade, or way of life, was that of a publican, or toll-gatherer to the Romans, (which probably had been his father's trade, his name denoting a broker or money-changer,) an office of bad report among the Jews. Indeed, among the Romans it was accounted a place of power and credit, and honourable reputation, not ordinarily conferred upon any but Roman knights; insomuch that T. Fl. Sabinus, father to the emperor Vespasian, was the publican of the Asian provinces, an office which he discharged so much to the content and satisfaction of the people, that they erected statues to him, with this inscription, *ΚΑΛΩΣ ΤΕΛΩΝΗΣΑΝΤΙ*,^b "To him that has well managed the publican-office." These officers being sent into the provinces to gather the tributes, were wont to employ the natives under them, as persons best skilled in the affairs and customs of their own country. Two things especially concurred to render this office odious to the Jews. First, that the persons that managed it were usually covetous, and great exactors; for having themselves farmed the customs of the Romans, they must gripe and scrape, by all methods of extortion, that they might be able both to pay their rent, and to raise gain and advantage to themselves: which, doubtless, Zacchæus, the chief of these farmers, was sensible of, when, after his conversion, he offered fourfold restitution to any man,^c from whom he had taken any thing by fraud and evil arts. And upon this account they became infamous, even among the Gentiles themselves,^d who commonly speak of them as cheats, and thieves, and public robbers, and worse members of a community, more voracious and destructive in a city, than wild beasts in the forest. The other thing that made the Jews so much detest them was, that this tribute was not only a grievance to their purses, but an affront to the liberty and freedom of their nation; for they looked upon themselves as a free-born people, and that they had been immediately invested in this privilege by God himself, and accordingly beheld this as a daily and standing instance of their slavery, which of all other things they could least endure, and which therefore betrayed them into so many unfortunate rebel-

^b Sueton. in vit. Vespas. c. 1.

^c Luke xix. 8.

^d Xeno Comic. apud Dicæarch. de vit. Græciæ, c. 4. Muson. apud Stob. Serm. ii. de Malit. p. 31. et Suid. in voc. Τελώνης.

lions against the Romans. Add to this, that these publicans were not only obliged, by the necessity of their trade, to have frequent dealing and converse with the Gentiles, (which the Jews held unlawful and abominable,) but that being Jews themselves they rigorously exacted these things of their brethren, and thereby seemed to conspire with the Romans to entail perpetual slavery upon their own nation. For though Tertullian thought that none but Gentiles were employed in this sordid office,^e yet the contrary is too evident to need any argument to prove it.

II. By these means, publicans became universally abhorred by the Jewish nation, that it was accounted unlawful to do them any office of common kindness and courtesy; nay, they held it no sin to cozen and overreach a publican, and that with the solemnity of an oath; they might not eat or drink, walk or travel with them; they were looked upon as common thieves and robbers, and money received of them might not be put to the rest of a man's estate, it being presumed to have been gained by rapine and violence; they were not admitted as persons fit to give testimony and evidence in any cause: so infamous were they, as not only to be banished all communion in the matters of divine worship, but to be shunned in all affairs of civil society and commerce, as the pests of their country, persons of an infectious converse, of as vile a class as heathens themselves: hence the common proverb among them, "Take not a wife out of that family wherein there is a publican, for they are all publicans;" that is, thieves, robbers, and wicked sinners. To this proverbial usage our Lord alludes, when speaking of a contumacious sinner, whom neither private reproofs, nor the public censures and admonitions of the church can prevail upon; "Let him be unto thee (says he) as an heathen and a publican;"^f as elsewhere publicans and sinners are yoked together, as persons of equal esteem and reputation. Of this trade and office was our St. Matthew, and it seems more particularly to have consisted in gathering the customs of commodities that came by the sea of Galilee, and the tribute which passengers were to pay that went by water; a thing frequently mentioned in the Jewish writings, where we are also told of the קשר, or "ticket," consisting of two greater letters written in paper, or some such matter, called

^e De pudicit. c. 7.

^f Matt. xviii. 17.

קשר מוכסין, "the ticket or signature of the publicans,"^a which the passenger had with him to certify them on the other side of the water, that he had already paid the toll or custom: upon which account the Hebrew gospel of St. Matthew, published by Munster, renders "publican" by בעל עברה "the lord of the passage." For this purpose they kept their office or custom-house by the sea side, that they might be always near at hand; and here it was (as St. Mark intimates) that Matthew had his toll-booth, where "he sat at the receipt of custom."

III. Our Lord having lately cured a famous paralytic, retired out of Capernaum to walk by the sea-side, where he taught the people that flocked after him.^b Here he espied Matthew, sitting in his custom-office, whom he called to come and follow him. The man was rich, had a wealthy and a gainful trade, a wise and prudent person, (no fools being put into that office,) and understood, no doubt, what it would cost him to comply with this new employment; that he must exchange wealth for poverty, a custom-house for a prison, gainful masters for a naked and despised Saviour. But he overlooked all these considerations, left all his interests and relations, to become our Lord's disciple, and to embrace *πραγματεῖαν πνευματικὴν*, (as Chrysostom observes,ⁱ) "a more spiritual way of commerce and traffic." We cannot suppose that he was before wholly unacquainted with our Saviour's person or doctrine, especially living at Capernaum, the place of Christ's usual residence, where his sermons and miracles were so frequent, by which he could not but, in some measure, be prepared to receive the impressions, which our Saviour's call now made upon him. And to shew that he was not discontented at his change, nor apprehended himself to be a loser by this bargain, he entertained our Lord and his disciples at a great dinner in his house, whither he invited his friends, especially those of his own profession, piously hoping that they also might be caught by our Saviour's converse and company. The Pharisees, whose eye was constantly evil where another man's was good, and who would either find or make occasions to snarl at him, began to suggest to his disciples, that it was unbecoming so pure and holy a person, as their Master represented himself to be, thus familiarly to

^a Vid. Buxtorf. Lex. in voc. מוכסין.

^b Matt. ix. 9. Mark ii. 13, 14. Luke v. 27, 28, 29.

ⁱ Homil. xi. s. 5. in 1 ad Cor. vol. x. p. 93.

converse with the worst of men, publicans and sinners, persons infamous to a proverb. But he presently replied upon them, that they were the sick that needed the physician, not the sound and healthy; that his company was most suitable where the necessities of souls did most require it; that God himself preferred acts of mercy and charity, especially in reclaiming sinners, and doing good to souls, infinitely before all ritual observances, and the nice rules of persons conversing with one another; and that the main design of his coming into the world was, not to bring the righteous, or those who, like themselves, proudly conceited themselves to be so, and, in a vain opinion of their own strictness, loftily scorned all mankind besides, but sinners, modest, humble, self-convinced offenders, to repentance, and to reduce them to a better state and course of life.

IV. After his election to the apostolate, he continued with the rest till our Lord's ascension, and then, for the first eight years at least, preached up and down Judea. After which, being to betake himself to the conversion of the Gentile world, he was entreated by the convert Jews to commit to writing the history of our Saviour's life and actions, and to leave it among them as the standing record of what he had preached to them; which he did accordingly, and so composed his gospel, whereof more in due place. Little certainty can be had what travels he underwent for the advancement of the Christian faith; so irrecoverably is truth lost in a crowd of legendary stories. Ethiopia is generally assigned as the province of his apostolical ministry.^k Metaphrastes tells us,^l that he went first into Parthia, and having successfully planted Christianity in those parts, thence travelled into Ethiopia, that is, the Asiatic Ethiopia, lying near to India. Here, by preaching and miracles, he mightily triumphed over error and idolatry; convinced and converted multitudes; ordained spiritual guides and pastors to confirm and build them up, and bring over others to the faith; and then finished his own course. As for what is related by Nicephorus,^m of his going into the country of the Cannibals, constituting Plato, one of his followers, bishop of Myrmena; of Christ's appearing to him in the form of a beautiful youth, and giving him a wand, which he pitching into the ground, immediately it grew up into a tree; of his strange converting the prince of that country; of his nu-

^k Socrat. l. i. c. 19.

^l Apud Sur. ad diem 21 Septemb.

^m Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 41.

merous miracles, peaceable death, and sumptuous funerals, with abundance more of the same stamp and coin, they are justly to be reckoned amongst those fabulous reports that have no pillar nor ground either of truth or probability to support them. Most probable it is, (what an ancient writer affirms,ⁿ) that he suffered martyrdom at Naddaber, a city in Ethiopia, but by what kind of death is altogether uncertain. Whether this Naddaber be the same with Beschberi, where the Arabic writer of his Life affirms him to have suffered martyrdom,^o let others inquire : he also adds,^p that he was buried in Arthaganelu Cæsarea, but where that is, is to me unknown. Dorotheus makes him honourably buried at Hierapolis in Parthia,^q one of the first places to which he preached the gospel.

V. He was a great instance of the power of religion, how much a man may be brought off to a better temper. If we reflect upon his circumstances while yet a stranger to Christ, we shall find that the world had very great advantages upon him. He was become a master of a plentiful estate, engaged in a rich and a gainful trade, supported by the power and favour of the Romans, prompted by covetous inclinations, and these confirmed by long habits and customs ; and yet, notwithstanding all this, no sooner did Christ call, but, without the least scruple or dissatisfaction, he flung up all at once, and not only renounced (as St. Basil observes^r) his gainful incomes, but ran an immediate hazard of the displeasure of his masters that employed him, for quitting their service, and leaving his accounts entangled and confused behind him. Had our Saviour been a mighty prince, it had been no wonder that he should run over to his service : but when he appeared under all the circumstances of meanness and disgrace, when he seemed to promise his followers nothing but misery and suffering in this life, and to propound no other rewards but the invisible encouragements of another world, his change in this case was the more strange and admirable. Indeed so admirable, that Porphyry and Julian^s (two subtle and acute adversaries of the Christian religion) hence took occasion to charge him either with falsehood, or with folly ; either that he gave not a true account

ⁿ Ven. Fortun. de Senat. Cur. Cæl. Poem. l. vii. p. 817.

^o Apud Kirsten. vit. 4. Evang. p. 30.

^p Ibid. p. 31.

^q Synops. de vit. et mort. App. in Bibl. Pp. vol. iii. p. 148.

^r Reg. fusius disput. Interrog. viii.

^s Ap. Hieron. in Matt. ix.

of the thing ; or, that it was very weakly done of him, so hastily to follow any one that called him. But the holy Jesus was no common person ; in all his commands there was somewhat more than ordinary. Indeed, St. Jerome conceives, that besides the divinity that manifested itself in his miracles, there was a divine brightness and a kind of majesty in our Saviour's looks, that at first sight was attractive enough to draw persons after him. However, his miraculous powers, that reflected a lustre from every quarter, and the efficacy of his doctrine accompanied with the grace of God, made way for the summons that were sent our apostle, and enabled him to conquer all oppositions that stood in the way to hinder him.

VII. His contempt of the world farther appeared in his exemplary temperance and abstemiousness from all the delights and pleasures, yea, the ordinary conveniences and accommodations of it ; so far from indulging his appetite with nice and delicate curiosities, that he refused to gratify it with lawful and ordinary provisions, eating no flesh, his usual diet being nothing but herbs, roots, seeds, and berries.[†] But what appeared most remarkable in him, and which, though the least virtue in itself, is the greatest in a wise man's esteem and value, was his humility ; mean and modest in his own conceit, in honour preferring others before himself. Whereas the other evangelists, in describing the apostles by pairs, constantly place him before Thomas,[‡] he modestly places him before himself. The rest of the evangelists openly mention the honour of his apostleship, but speak of his former sordid, dishonest, and disgraceful course of life only under the name of Levi, while he himself sets it down, with all its circumstances, under his own proper and common name : which as at once it commends his own candour and ingenuity, so it administers to us this not unuseful consideration, that the greatest sinners are not excluded the lines of divine grace ; nor can any, if penitent, have just reason to despair, when publicans and sinners are taken in. And as St. Matthew himself does freely and impartially record his own vile and dishonourable course of life, so the two other evangelists, though setting down the story, take notice of him only under another name ;^{*} to teach us to treat a penitent brother with all modesty and tenderness. " If

[†] Clem. Alex. *Pædag.* l. ii. c. 1.

[‡] Hieron. *Comm. in Matt.* c. x.

^{*} Hieron. *ibid.*

לֹא יֹאמַר לוֹ זָכוֹר מַעֲשֵׂיךָ הָרִאשׁוֹנִים (say the Jews,^y) “let no man say to him, remember thy former works;” which they explain not only concerning Israelites, but even strangers and proselytes. It being against the rules of civility, as well as the laws of religion, when a man hath repented, to upbraid and reproach him with the errors and follies of his past life.

VII. The last thing that calls for any remarks in the life of this apostle is his gospel, written at the entreaty of the Jewish converts, and, as Epiphanius tells us,^z at the command of the apostles, while he was yet in Palestine, about eight years after the death of Christ: though Nicephorus will have it to be written fifteen years after our Lord's ascension;^a and Irenæus^b yet much wider, who seems to imply that it was written while Peter and Paul preached at Rome, which was not, according to the common account, till near thirty years after: but most plain it is, that it must be written before the dispersion of the apostles, seeing St. Bartholomew (as we have noted in his Life) took it along with him into India, and left it there. He wrote it in Hebrew, as primarily designing it for the use of his countrymen; and strange it is, that any should question its being originally written in that language, when the thing is so universally and uncontrollably asserted by all antiquity;^c not one, that I know of, after the strictest inquiry I could make, dissenting in this matter, and who certainly had far greater opportunities of being satisfied in these things than we can have at so great a distance. It was, no doubt, soon after translated into Greek, though by whom St. Jerome professes he could not tell: Theophylact says,^d it was reported to have been done by St. John; but Athanasius^e more expressly attributes the translation to St. James the Less. The best is, it matters not much whether it was translated by an apostle, or some disciple, so long as the apostles approved the

^y Bava Metsia. fol. lviii. 2.

^z Hæres. li. c. 5.

^a Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 45.

^b Adv. Hær. l. iii. c. 1.

^c Papias ap. Euseb. l. iii. c. 39. Iren. l. iii. c. 1. Origen. Exposit. in Matt. l. v. ap. Euseb. l. vi. c. 25. Athan. Synops. S. Script. Cyril. Hierosolym. Catech. xiv. s. 8. Epiphan. Hæres. xxix. c. 9. Hæres. li. c. 5. Chrysost. Hom. l. s. 3. in Matt. vol. vii. p. 3. Hieron. de Script. Eccl. in Matt. Præf. in 4. Evang. ad Dam. et alibi sæpe. August. de Consens. Evang. l. i. c. 2. Doroth. Synops. de vit. App. p. 148. Anast. Sinait. Hexæm. l. viii. Arab. quidam in vit. MS. Matthæi, apud Kirsten. de vit. quat. Evang. n. 10. p. 29. Paraphr. Syrus ad calc. Evang. S. Matt. Ita Arab. et versio Persic. Præfat. ad id. Evang.

^d Præf. Comm. in Matt.

^e Synops. S. Script.

version, and that the church has ever received the Greek copy for authentic, and reposed it in the sacred canon. And, therefore, when the late Arian advocate^f brings in one of his party challenging the divine authority of this gospel, because but a translation, he might have remembered it is such a translation, as has all the advantages of an original, as being translated while the apostles were yet in being to supervise and ratify it, and whose authority has always been held sacred and inviolable by the whole church of God. But the plain truth of the case is, St. Matthew is a back friend to the Antitrinitarian cause, as recording that express command, "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:" which words must needs be supposititious, and added by some ignorant hand, for no other reason but because they make against them. Nay, the whole gospel we see must be discarded, rather than stand in the way of a dear and beloved opinion.

VIII. After the Greek translation was entertained, the Hebrew copy was chiefly owned and used by the Nazaræi,^g a middle sect of men between Jews and Christians; with the Christians they believed in Christ, and embraced his religion, with the Jews they adhered to the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, and hence this gospel came to be styled the "gospel according to the Hebrews," and "the gospel of the Nazarenes." By them it was by degrees interpolated, several passages of the evangelical history, which they had heard, either from the apostles or those who had familiarly conversed with them, being inserted, which the ancient fathers frequently refer to in their writings: as by the Ebionites it was mutilated,^h and many things cut off, for the same reason for which the followers of Cerinthus,ⁱ though making use of the greatest part of it, rejected the rest, because it made so much against them. This Hebrew copy (though whether exactly the same as it was written by St. Matthew, I will not say) was found, among other books, in the treasury of the Jews at Tiberias, by Joseph, a Jew,^k and after his conversion a man of great honour and esteem in the time of Constantine; another, St. Jerome assures us,^l was kept in the library at Cæsarea, in his time, and another by the Nazarenes at Berœa, from whom he had

^f Sand. interpret. paradox. ad Matt. xxviii. 20.

^h Epiph. Hæres. xxx. c. 13.

^k Epiph. Hæres. xxx. c. 6. Vid. c. 3.

^g Epiph. Hæres. xxix. c. 9.

ⁱ Epiph. Hæres. xxviii. c. 5.

^l De Script. Eccl. in Matt.

the liberty to transcribe it ; and which he afterwards translated both into Greek and Latin, with this particular observation, that in quoting the texts of the Old Testament, the evangelist immediately follows the Hebrew, without taking notice of the translation of the Septuagint. A copy also of this gospel was, anno 485, dug up and found in the grave of Barnabas in Cyprus, transcribed with his own hand.^m But these copies are long since perished ; and for those that have been since published to the world, both by Tile and Munster, were there no other argument, they too openly betray themselves, by their barbarous and improper style, not to be the genuine issue of that less corrupt and better age.

^m Theodor. Lect. Collectan. l. ii. non longe ab init.

THE LIFE OF SAINT THOMAS.

The custom of the Jews to have both an Hebrew and a Roman name. St. Thomas's name the same in Syriac and Greek. His country and trade. His call to the apostleship. His great affection to our Saviour. Christ's discourse with him concerning the way to eternal life. His obstinate refusal to believe our Lord's resurrection, and the unreasonableness of his infidelity. Our Lord's convincing him by sensible demonstrations. St. Thomas's deputing Thaddæus to Abgarus of Edessa. His travels into Parthia, Media, Persia, &c. Ethiopia, what, and where situate. His coming into India, and the success of his preaching there. An account of his acts in India, from the relation of the Portuguese at their first coming thither. His converting the king of Malipur. The manner of his martyrdom by the Brachmans. The miracles said to be done at his tomb. His bones dug up by the Portuguese. A cross, and several brass tables with inscriptions found there. An account of the Indian or St. Thomas-Christians, their number, state, rites, and way of life.

It was customary with the Jews, when travelling into foreign countries, or familiarly conversing with the Greeks and Romans, to assume to themselves a Greek or a Latin name, of great affinity, and sometimes of the very same signification with that of their own country. Thus our Lord was called Christ, answering to his Hebrew title *Mashiach*, or the Anointed; Simon styled Peter according to that of *Cephas*, which our Lord put upon him; *Tabitha* called *Dorcas*, both signifying a goat: thus our St. Thomas, according to the Syriac importance of his name, had the title of *Didymus*, which signifies a twin, "Thomas which is called *Didymus*." Accordingly, the Syriac version renders it, "*Thauma*, which is called *Thama*," that is, a twin: the not understanding whereof imposed upon *Nonnus*, the Greek paraphrast,* who makes him *ἄνδρα διώνυμον*, "to have had two distinct names," *διώνυμος ἔνεπε Θωμάς, Ὁν Δίδυμον καλέουσι*: it being but the same name expressed in different languages. The history of the gospel takes no particular notice

* *Nonn. Panop. in Joan. c. xi.*

either of the country or kindred of this apostle. That he was a Jew is certain, and in all probability a Galilean: he was born (if we may believe Symeon Metaphrastes^b) of very mean parents, who brought him up to the trade of fishing, but withal took care to give him a more useful education, instructing him in the knowledge of the scriptures, whereby he learnt wisely to govern his life and manners. He was, together with the rest, called to the apostleship, and not long after gave an eminent instance of his hearty willingness to undergo the saddest fate that might attend them. For when the rest of the apostles dissuaded our Saviour from going into Judea, (whither he was now resolved, for the raising his dear Lazarus, lately dead,) lest the Jews should stone him, as but a little before they had attempted it, St. Thomas desires them not to hinder Christ's journey thither, though it might cost their lives,^c "Let us also go that we may die with him," probably concluding, that instead of raising Lazarus from the dead, they themselves should be sent with him to their own graves. So that he made up in pious affections, what he seemed to want in the quickness and acumen of his understanding, not readily apprehending some of our Lord's discourses, nor over-forward to believe more than himself had seen. When the holy Jesus, a little before his fatal sufferings, had been speaking to them of the joys of heaven, and had told them that he was going to prepare, that they might follow him; that they knew both the place whither he was going, and the way thither; our apostle replied,^d that they knew not whither he went, and much less the way that led to it. To which our Lord returns this short but satisfactory answer: that he was the "true living way," the person whom the Father had sent into the world to shew men the paths of eternal life; and that they could not miss of heaven, if they did but keep to that way, which he had prescribed and chalked out before them.

II. Our Lord being dead, it is evident how much the apostles were distracted between hopes and fears concerning his resurrection, not yet fully satisfied about it: which engaged him the sooner to hasten his appearance, that by the sensible manifestations of himself he might put the case beyond all possibilities of dispute. The very day whereon he arose, he came into the

^b Apud Sur. ad diem 21 Decemb. n. 2.

^c John xi. 16.

^d John xiv. 5.

house where they were,* while, for fear of the Jews, the doors were yet fast shut about them, and gave them sufficient assurance that he was really risen from the dead. At this meeting St. Thomas was absent; having probably never recovered their company, since their last dispersion in the garden, when every one's fears prompted him to consult his own safety. At his return, they told him that their Lord had appeared to them; but he obstinately refused to give credit to what they said, or to believe that it was he, presuming it rather a phantasm or mere apparition, unless he might see the very prints of the nails, and feel the wounds in his hands and sides. A strange piece of infidelity! Was this any more than what Moses and the prophets had long since foretold? had not our Lord frequently told them, in plain terms, that he must rise again the third day? could he question the possibility of it, who had so often seen him do the greatest miracles? was it reasonable to reject the testimony of so many eyewitnesses, ten to one against himself, and of whose fidelity he was assured? or could he think, that either themselves should be deceived, or that they would jest and trifle with him in so solemn and serious a matter? A stubbornness that might have betrayed him into an eternal infidelity. But our compassionate Saviour would not take advantage of the man's refractory unbelief, but on that day seven-night again came to them, as they were solemnly met at their devotions, and calling to Thomas, bade him look upon his hands, put his fingers into the prints of the nails, and thrust his hand into the hole of his side, and satisfy his faith by a demonstration from sense. The man was quickly convinced of his error and obstinacy, confessing that he now acknowledged him to be his very Lord and Master, a God omnipotent, that was thus able to rescue himself from the powers of death. Our Lord replied no more, than that it was well he believed his own senses; but that it was a more noble and commendable act of faith to acquiesce in a rational evidence, and to entertain the doctrines and relations of the gospel upon such testimonies and assurances of the truth of things, as will satisfy a wise and sober man, though he did not see them with his own eyes.

III. The blessed Jesus being gone to heaven, and having eminently given gifts and miraculous powers to the apostles,

* John xx. 19.

St. Thomas, moved thereto by some divine intimation, is said to have despatched Thaddæus,^f one of the seventy disciples, to Abgarus, toparch of Edessa, (between whom and our Saviour the letters, commonly said to have passed, are still extant in Eusebius,) whom he first cured of an inveterate distemper, and after converted him and his subjects to the faith. The apostolical province assigned to St. Thomas (as Origen tells us^g) was Parthia; after which Sophronius and others inform us,^h that he preached the gospel to the Medes, Persians, Carmans, Hyrcani, Bactrians, and the neighbour nations. In Persia, one of the ancients (upon what ground I know not) acquaints us,ⁱ that he met with the magi, or wise men, who came that long journey from the East to bring presents to our new-born Saviour, whom he baptized, and took along with him as his companions and assistants in the propagation of the gospel. Hence he preached in and passed through Ethiopia,^k that is, (that we may a little clear this by the way,) the Asian Ethiopia, conterminous to, if not the same with Chaldea; whence Tacitus^l does not only make the Jews descendants from the Ethiopians, as whose ancestors came from Ur of the Chaldeans; but Hesychius makes the inhabitants of Zagrus, a mountain beyond Tigris, *ἔθνος Αἰθιόπων*,^m “a people of the Ethiopians.” This is the *ארץ כוש* mentioned by Benjamin the Jew in his Itinerary,ⁿ the “land of Cush” or Ethiopia; the inhabitants whereof are styled by Herodotus,^o *οἱ ἀπ’ ἡλίου ἀνατολέων Αἰθίοπες*, the “oriental Ethiopians,” by way of distinction from those *ὑπὲρ Αἰγύπτου*, who lived south of Egypt, and were under the same military prefecture with the Arabians under the command of Arsames, as the other were joined with the Indians, and in the same place are called *οἱ ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας Αἰθίοπες*, the “Asian Ethiopians.” Having travelled through these countries, he at last came to India. We are told by Nicephorus,^p that he was at first unwilling to venture himself into those countries, fearing he should find their manners as rude and

^f Euseb. l. i. c. 13; et l. ii. c. 1.

^g Lib. iii. in Gen. ap. Euseb. l. iii. c. 1. Socrat. l. i. c. 19. Clem. Recognit. l. ix. a. 29.

^h Ap. Hier. de Script. in Thoma. Theod. de Leg. Serm. ix.

ⁱ Auth. Oper. Imperf. in Matt. ap. Chrysost. Hom. ii. vol. vi. p. xxviii. inter spuria.

^k Chrysost. Serm. in xii. App. vol. viii. p. 11. inter spuria. ^l Hist. l. v. c. 2.

^m Hesych. in voc. *Σάργα*.

ⁿ Itin. D. Benj. Tud. p. 98.

^o Lib. vii. c. 69, 70.

^p Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 40.

intractable as their faces were black and deformed, till encouraged by a vision, that assured him of the divine presence to assist him. He travelled a great way into those Eastern nations, as far as the island Taprobane, since called Sumatra, and the country of the Brachmans, preaching every where with all the arts of gentleness and mild persuasives;⁹ not flying out into tart invectives and furious heats against their idolatrous practices, but calmly instructing them in the principles of Christianity, by degrees persuading them to renounce their follies, knowing that confirmed habits must be cured by patience and long forbearing, by slow and gentle methods; and by these means he wrought upon the people, and brought them over from the grossest errors and superstition to the hearty belief and entertainment of religion.

IV. In want of better evidence from antiquity, it may not be amiss to inquire, what account the Portuguese, in their first discoveries of these countries, received of these matters; partly from ancient monuments and writings, partly from constant and uncontrolled traditions, which the Christians whom they found in those parts preserved amongst them. They tell us,^r that St. Thomas came first to Socotora, an island in the Arabian sea; thence to Cranganor; where having converted many, he travelled farther into the East, and having successfully preached the gospel, returned back into the kingdom of Coromandel; where at Malipur, the metropolis of the kingdom, not far from the influx of Ganges into the gulf of Bengala, he began to erect a place for divine worship, till prohibited by the priests, and Sagamo, prince of that country. But, upon the conviction of several miracles, the work went on, and the Sagamo himself embraced the Christian faith, whose example was soon followed by great numbers of his friends and subjects. The Brachmans, who plainly perceived that this would certainly spoil their trade, and in time extirpate the religion of their country, thought it high time to put a stop to this growing novelism, and resolved, in council, that some way or other the apostle must be put to death. There was a tomb not far from the city, whither the apostle was wont to retire to his solitudes and private devotions: hither the Brachmans and their armed followers pursue the apostle; and while he was intent at prayer, they first load him with darts and

⁹ S. Metaphr. ad 21 Decemb. n. 8, 9.

^r Maff. Hist. Indic. l. ii. p. 85.

stones, till one of them, coming nearer, ran him through with a lance. His body was taken up by his disciples, and buried in the church which he had lately built, and which was afterwards improved into a fabric of great stateliness and magnificence. Gregory of Tours relates many miracles done upon the annual solemnities of his martyrdom;^a and one standing miracle, an account whereof, he tells us, he received from one Theodorus, who had himself been in that place, viz. that in the temple where the apostle was buried there hung a lamp before his tomb, which burnt perpetually, without oil or any fuel to feed and nourish it, the light whereof was never diminished, nor by wind or any other accident could be extinguished. But whether travellers might not herein be imposed upon by the crafty artifices of the priests, or those who did attend the church; or, if true, whether it might not be performed by art, I leave to others to inquire. Some will have his body to have been afterwards translated to Edessa, a city in Mesopotamia; but the Christians in the East constantly affirm it to have remained in the place of his martyrdom, where (if we may believe relations^b) it was after dug up, with great cost and care, at the command of Don Emanuel Frea, governor of the coast of Coromandel, and together with it was found the bones of the Sagamo, whom he had converted to the faith.

V. While Don Alfonso Sousa,^c one of the first viceroys in India under John the Third, king of Portugal, resided in these parts, certain brass tables were brought to him, whose ancient inscriptions could scarce be read, till at last, by the help of a Jew, an excellent antiquary, they were found to contain nothing but a donation made to St. Thomas, whereby the king, who then reigned, granted to him a piece of ground for the building of a church. They tell us also of a famous cross found in St. Thomas's chapel at Malipur, wherein was an unintelligible inscription, which by a learned Bramin (whom they compelled to read and expound it) gave an account to this effect: that Thomas, a divine person, was sent into those countries by the Son of God, in the time of king Sagamo, to instruct them in the knowledge of the true God; that he built a church, and performed admirable miracles; but at last, while upon his knees at prayer, was by a

^a De glor. Martyr. l. i. c. 32.

^b Maff. Hist. Indic. l. viii. p. 363.

^c Osor. de reb. Emman. l. iii. p. 120.

Brachman thrust through with a spear; and that that cross, stained with his blood, had been left as a memorial of these matters: an interpretation that was afterwards confirmed by another grave and learned Bramin, who expounded the inscription to the very same effect. The judicious reader will measure his belief of these things by the credit of the reporters, and the rational probability of the things themselves, which, for my part, as I cannot certainly affirm to be true, so I will not utterly conclude them to be false.

VI. From these first plantations of Christianity in the Eastern India by our apostle, there is said to have been a continued series and succession of Christians (hence called St. Thomas-Christians) in those parts unto this day. The Portuguese, at their first arrival here, found them in great numbers in several places, no less, as some tell us, than fifteen or sixteen thousand families.^x They are very poor, and their churches generally mean and sordid, wherein they had no images of saints, nor any representations but that of the cross; they are governed in spirituals by an high-priest, (whom some make an Armenian patriarch, of the sect of Nestorius, but, in truth, is no other than the patriarch of Muzal, the remainder, as is probable, of the ancient Seleucia, and by some, though erroneously, styled Babylon,) residing northward in the mountains, who, together with twelve cardinals, two patriarchs, and several bishops, disposes of all affairs referring to religion; and to him all the Christians of the East yield subjection. They promiscuously admit all to the holy communion, which they receive under both kinds of bread and wine, though instead of wine, which their country affords not, making use of the juice of raisins, steeped one night in water, and then pressed forth. Children, unless in case of sickness, are not baptized till the fortieth day. At the death of friends, their kindred and relations keep an eight-days' feast in memory of the departed. Every Lord's-day they have their public assemblies for prayer and preaching, their devotions being managed with great reverence and solemnity. Their Bible, at least the New Testament, is in the Syriac language, to the study whereof the preachers earnestly exhort the people. They observe the times of Advent and Lent, the festivals of our Lord, and many of the saints;

^x Osor. p. 119. et seq. Maff. l. ii. p. 88. Joseph. Ind. Navig. inter Relat. Nov. Orb. c. 133, 134. Vid. M. Paul. Ven. l. iii. c. 17. ibid.

those especially that relate to St. Thomas, the *Dominica in Albis*, or "Sunday after Easter," in memory of the famous confession which St. Thomas on that day made of Christ, after he had been sensibly cured of his unbelief; another on the first of July, celebrated not only by Christians, but by Moors and Pagans; the people who come to his sepulchre on pilgrimage carrying away a little of the red earth of the place where he was interred, which they keep as an inestimable treasure, and conceit it sovereign against diseases. They have a kind of monasteries of the religious, who live in great abstinence and chastity. Their priests are shaven in the fashion of a cross, have leave to marry once, but denied a second time: no marriages to be dissolved but by death. These rites and customs they solemnly pretend to have derived from the very time of St. Thomas, and with the greatest care and diligence do observe them at this day.

THE LIFE OF SAINT JAMES THE LESS.

St. James the Less proved to be the same with him that was bishop of Jerusalem. His kindred and relations. The son of Joseph by a former wife. The brethren of our Lord, who. His country, what. Our Lord's appearance to him after his resurrection. Invested in the see of Jerusalem, by whom, and why. His authority in the synod at Jerusalem. His great diligence and fidelity in his ministry. The conspiracy of his enemies to take away his life. His discourse with the Scribes and Pharisees about the Messiah. His martyrdom, and the manner of it. His burial, where. His death resented by the Jews. His strictness in religion. His priesthood, whence. His singular delight in prayer, and efficacy in it. His great love and charity to men. His admirable humility. His temperance, according to the rules of the Nazarite order. The love and respect of the people towards him. His death an inlet to the destruction of the Jewish nation. His epistle, when written. What the design and purpose of it. The Proto-evangelium ascribed to him.

BEFORE we can enter upon the life of this apostle, some difficulty must be cleared, relating to his person. Doubted it has been by some, whether this was the same with that St. James that was bishop of Jerusalem; three of this name being presented to us, St. James the Great, this St. James the Less, (both apostles,) and a third surnamed the Just, distinct (say they) from the former, and bishop of Jerusalem. But this (however pretending to some little countenance from antiquity) is a very great mistake, and built upon a sandy bottom. For besides that the scripture mentions no more than two of this name, and both apostles, nothing can be plainer, than that that St. James, the apostle, whom St. Paul calls "our Lord's brother," and reckons, with Peter and John, one of the pillars of the church, was the same that presided among the apostles, (no doubt, by virtue of his place, it being his episcopal chair,) and determined in the synod at Jerusalem. Nor do either Clemens Alexandrinus,^a or Eusebius, out of him, mention any more than two; St. James, put to death

^a Clem. Alex. Hypotyp. l. vii. ap. Euseb. l. ii. c. 1.

by Herod, and St. James the Just, bishop of Jerusalem, whom they expressly affirm to be the same with him whom St. Paul calls the brother of our Lord. Once, indeed, Eusebius makes our St. James one of the Seventy, though elsewhere,^b quoting a place of Clemens of Alexandria,^c he numbers him with the chief of the apostles, and expressly distinguishes him from the seventy disciples. Nay, St. Jerome,^d though when representing the opinion of others he styles him the "thirteenth" apostle, yet elsewhere,^e when speaking his own sense, sufficiently proves that there were but two; James the son of Zebedee, and the other the son of Alphæus; the one surnamed the Greater, the other the Less: besides that the main support of the other opinion is built upon the authority of Clemens's Recognitions, a book, in doubtful cases, of no esteem and value.

II. This doubt being removed, we proceed to the history of his life. He was the son (as we may probably conjecture) of Joseph (afterwards husband to the blessed Virgin) and his first wife, whom St. Jerome,^f from tradition, styles Escha; Hippolytus, bishop of Porto, calls Salome; and farther adds,^g that she was the daughter of Aggi, brother to Zacharias, father to John the Baptist. Hence reputed our Lord's brother, in the same sense that he was reputed the son of Joseph. Indeed, we find several spoken of in the history of the gospel, who were Christ's brethren; but in what sense, was controverted of old. St. Jerome, Chrysostom, and some others, will have them so called, because the sons of Mary, cousin-german, or, according to the custom of the Hebrew language, sister to the Virgin Mary. But Eusebius,^h Epiphanius,ⁱ and the far greater part of the ancients, (from whom, especially in matters of fact, we are not rashly to depart,) make them the children of Joseph by a former wife. And this seems most genuine and natural, the evangelists seeming very express and accurate in the account which they give of them:^j "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and

^b Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 12.

^c Lib. ii. c. 1.

^d Comment. in Isai. c. 17.

^e Adv. Helvid.

^f Comment. in Matt. xii.

^g Ap. Niceph. l. ii. c. 3.

^h Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 1.

ⁱ Hæres. xxviii. c. 7. contr. Naz. Hæres. xxix. c. 4. et Hæres. lxxviii. c. 13. Greg. Nyssen. de Resurrect. Christ. Orat. ii. vol. ii. p. 844.

^j Matt. xiii. 55, 56.

Jude? and his sisters, (whose names, says the foresaid Hippolytus, were Ester and Thamar,) are they not all with us, whence then hath this man these things?" By which it is plain, that the Jews understood these persons not to be Christ's kinsmen only, but his brothers, the same carpenter's sons, having the same relation to him that Christ himself had: though, indeed, they had more, Christ being but his reputed, they his natural sons. Upon this account the blessed Virgin is sometimes called "the mother of James and Joses;"^k for so amongst the women that attended at our Lord's crucifixion, we find three eminently taken notice of, "Mary Magdalen, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children."^l Where, by Mary the mother of James and Joses, no other can be meant than the Virgin Mary: it not being reasonable to suppose that the evangelists should omit the blessed Virgin, who was certainly there; and therefore St. John,^m reckoning up the same persons, expressly styles her "the mother of Jesus." And though it is true she was but St. James's mother-in-law, yet the evangelists might choose so to style her, because commonly so called after Joseph's death; and probably (as Gregory of Nyssa thinksⁿ) known by that name all along, choosing that title that the Son of God, whom as a virgin she had brought forth, might be better concealed, and less exposed to the malice of the envious Jews: nor is it any more wonder, that she should be esteemed and called the "mother of James," than that Joseph should be styled and accounted the "father of Jesus." To which add, that Josephus,^o eminently skilful in matters of genealogy and descent, expressly says, that our St. James was the brother of Jesus Christ. One thing there is that may seem to lie against it, that he is called "the Son of Alphæus."^p But this may probably mean no more, than either that Joseph was so called by another name, (it being frequent, yea, almost constant, among the Jews, for the same person to have two names, *Quis unquam prohibuerit duobus vel tribus nominibus hominem unum vocari?* as St. Augustine speaks in a parallel case,^q) or (as a learned man conjectures^r) it may relate to his being a disciple of some parti-

^k Matt. xxvii. 56. Mark xiv. 40.

^m John xix. 25.

ⁿ Ubi supr.

^p Matt. x. 3.

^r Bolduc. de Eccl. post. leg. c. 7.

^l Greg. Nyssen. loc. supr. laud.

^o Antiq. Jud. l. xx. c. 8.

^q De Consens. Evangel. l. ii. c. 28.

cular sect or synagogue among the Jews, called Alphæans, from **אַלְפָּא**, denoting a "family," or society of devout and learned men of somewhat more eminency than the rest, there being, as he tells us, many such at this time among the Jews; and in this, probably, St. James had entered himself, the great reputation of his piety and strictness, his wisdom, parts, and learning, rendering the conjecture above the censure of being trifling and contemptible.

III. Of the place of his birth the sacred story makes no mention. The Jews, in their Talmud,³ (for doubtless they intend the same person,) style him, more than once, **אִישׁ כַּפֵּר סֶכְנִיָּא**, "a man of the town of Sechania;" though where that was, I am not able to conjecture. What was his particular way and course of life before his being called to the discipleship and apostolate, we find no intimations of in the history of the gospel, nor any distinct account concerning him during our Saviour's life. After the resurrection, he was honoured with a particular appearance of our Lord to him, which, though silently passed over by the evangelists, is recorded by St. Paul;⁴ next to the manifesting himself to the five hundred brethren at once, "he was seen of James," which is by all understood of our apostle. St. Jerome,⁵ out of the Hebrew gospel of the Nazarenes, (wherein many passages are set down, omitted by the evangelical historians,) gives us a fuller relation of it, viz. that St. James had solemnly sworn, that from the time that he had drank of the cup at the institution of the supper, he would eat bread no more, till he saw the Lord risen from the dead. Our Lord, therefore, being returned from the grave, came and appeared to him, commanded bread to be set before him, which he took, blessed, and brake, and gave to St. James, saying, "Eat thy bread, my brother, for the Son of man is truly risen from among them that sleep." After Christ's ascension, (though I will not venture to determine the precise time,) he was chosen bishop of Jerusalem, preferred before all the rest, for his near relation unto Christ; for this we find to have been the reason why they chose Symeon to be his immediate successor in that see,⁶ because he was, after him, our

³ Midr. Kobel. et Abod. Zarah. c. 2. et Glossa En Mischp. vid. Chr. Nold. Hist. Idum. p. 394.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 7.

⁵ De Script. Eccles. in Jacob. min.

⁶ Hegesip. apud Euseb. l. iv. c. 22.

Lord's next kinsman. A consideration that made Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, though they had been peculiarly honoured by our Saviour, not to contend for this high and honourable place,^y but freely choose James the Just to be bishop of it. This dignity is by some of the ancients^z said to have been conferred on him by Christ himself, constituting him bishop at the time of his appearing to him. But it is safest with others to understand it of its being done by the apostles, or possibly by some particular intimation concerning it, which our Lord might leave behind him.

IV. To him we find St. Paul making his address after his conversion,^a by whom he was honoured with the right hand of fellowship: to him Peter sent the news of his miraculous deliverance out of prison, "Go, shew these things unto James, and to the brethren,"^b that is, to the whole church, and especially St. James, the bishop and pastor of it. But he was principally active in the synod at Jerusalem in the great controversy about the Mosaic rites: for the case being opened by Peter, and farther debated by Paul and Barnabas, at last stood up St. James to pass the final and decreatory sentence,^c that the Gentile converts were not to be troubled with the bondage of the Jewish yoke, only that, for a present accommodation, some few indifferent rites should be observed; ushering in the expedient with this positive conclusion, *διὰ ἐγὼ κρίνω*, I thus "judge" or decide the matter, "this is my sentence" and determination. A circumstance the more considerable, because spoken at the same time when Peter was in council, who produced no such intimation of his authority.^d Had the champions of the church of Rome but such a passage for Peter's judiciary authority and power, it would no doubt have made a louder noise in the world, than, "Thou art Peter," or, "Feed my sheep."

V. He administered his province with all possible care and industry, omitting no part of a diligent and faithful guide of souls; strengthening the weak, informing the ignorant, reducing

^y Clem. Alex. Hypot. l. vi. ap. Euseb. l. ii. c. 1.

^z Phot. Ep. 117. ad Theodos. Monach. p. 158. Theophyl. in 1 ad Cor. xv. 7. Vid. Euseb. l. vii. c. 13.

^a Gal. i. 19; ii. 9.

^b Acts xii. 17.

^c Acts xv. 13.

^d Chrysost. Homil. xxxiii. in Act. App. Hesych. Presb. Hierosol. Serm. in Jac. apud Phot. Cod. CLXXV. col. 1525.

the erroneous, reproving the obstinate, and by the constancy of his preaching conquering the stubbornness of that perverse and refractory generation that he had to deal with, many of the nobler and the better sort being brought over to a compliance with the Christian faith. So careful, so successful in his charge, that he awakened the spite and malice of his enemies to conspire his ruin:^e a sort of men of whom the apostle has given too true a character, "that they please not God, and are contrary to all men." Vexed they were to see that St. Paul, by appealing to Cæsar, had escaped their hands:^f malice is as greedy and insatiable as hell itself, and therefore now turn their revenge upon St. James, which, not being able to effect under Festus's government, they more effectually attempted under the procuratorship of Albinus, his successor; Ananus the Younger, then high-priest, and of the sect of the Sadducees, (*περὶ τὰς κλίσεις ὡμοὶ παρὰ πάντας τοὺς Ἰουδαίους*, says Josephus,^g speaking of this very passage, "of all others the most merciless and implacable justicers,") resolving to despatch him before the new governor could arrive. To this end a council is hastily summoned, and the apostle, with some others, arraigned and condemned as violators of the law. But that the thing might be carried in a more plausible and popular way, they set the Scribes and Pharisees (crafts-masters in the arts of dissimulation) at work to ensnare him; who coming to him, began by flattering insinuations to set upon him. They tell him,^h that they all had a mighty confidence in him, and that the whole nation, as well as they, gave him the testimony of a most just man, and one that was no respecter of persons; that therefore they desired he would correct the error and false opinion which the people had of Jesus, whom they looked upon as the Messiah, and would take this opportunity of the universal confluence to the paschal solemnity, to set them right in their notions about these things, and would, to that end, go up with them to the top of the temple, where he might be seen and heard by all. Being advantageously placed upon a pinnacle or wing of the temple, they made this address to him. "Tell us, O Justus, whom we have all the reason in the world to believe, that seeing the people are thus generally led away with the doctrine of Jesus that was crucified,

^e Euseb. l. ii. c. 23.^f Id. *ibid*.^g Antiq. Jud. l. xx. c. 8.^h Hegesip. Comm. l. v. apud Euseb. l. ii. c. 23.

tell us, what is this institution of the crucified Jesus?" To which the apostle answered, with an audible voice, "Why do ye inquire of Jesus the Son of man? He sits in heaven, on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and will come again in the clouds of heaven." The people below hearing it, glorified the blessed Jesus, and openly proclaimed "Hosanna to the Son of David." The Scribes and Pharisees perceived now that they had overshot themselves, and that instead of reclaiming, they had confirmed the people in their error; that there was no way left, but presently to despatch him, that by his sad fate others might be warned not to believe him. Whereupon suddenly crying out, that Justus himself was seduced and become an impostor, they threw him down from the place where he stood. Though bruised, he was not killed by the fall, but recovered so much strength, as to get upon his knees, and pray to heaven for them. Malice is of too bad a nature either to be pacified with kindness, or satisfied with cruelty: jealousy is not more the rage of a man, than malice is the rage of the devil, the very soul and spirit of the apostate nature. Little portions of revenge do but inflame it, and serve to flesh it up into a fiercer violence. Vexed that they had not done his work, they fell fresh upon the poor remainders of his life; and while he was yet at prayer, and that a Rechabite, who stood by, (which, says Epiphanius,ⁱ was Symeon, his kinsman and successor,) stepped in, and entreated them to spare him, a just and a righteous man, and who was then praying for them, they began to load him with a shower of stones, till one, more mercifully cruel than the rest, with a fuller's club beat out his brains. Thus died this good man in the ninety-sixth year of his age, and about twenty-four years after Christ's ascension into heaven, (as Epiphanius,^k) being taken away, to the great grief and regret of all good men, yea of all sober and just persons, even amongst the Jews themselves; ὅσοι δὲ ἐδόκουν ἐπιεικέστατοι τῶν κατὰ τὴν πόλιν εἶναι, καὶ περὶ τοὺς νόμους ἀκριβεῖς, βαρέως ἤνεγκαν ἐπὶ τούτῳ, as Josephus himself confesses,^l speaking of this matter. He was buried (says Gregory bishop of Tours^m) upon Mount Olivet, in a tomb which he had built for himself, and wherein he had buried Zacharias and old Symeon: which I am rather inclinable to believe, than what Hegesippus reports,ⁿ

ⁱ Hæres. lxxviii. s. 14.^k Epiph. *ibid*.^l Antiq. Jud. l. xx. c. 8.^m De glor. Martyr. l. i. c. 27.ⁿ Ap. Euseb. l. ii. c. 23.

that he was buried near the temple, in the place of his martyrdom, and that a monument was there erected for him, which remained a long time after. For the Jews were not ordinarily wont to bury within the city, much less so near the temple, and least of all would they suffer him, whom as a blasphemer and impostor they had so lately put to death.

VI. He was a man of exemplary and extraordinary piety and devotion, educated under the strictest rules and institutions of religion; a priest (as we may probably guess) of the ancient order of Rechabites; or rather, as Epiphanius conjectures,^o *κατὰ τὴν παλαιὰν ἱερωσύνην*, “according to the most ancient order and form of priesthood,” when the sacerdotal office was the prerogative of the first-born: and such was St. James, the eldest son of Joseph, and thereby sanctified and set apart for it: though whether this way of priesthood at any time held under the Mosaic dispensation, we have no intimations in the holy story. But, however he came by it, upon some such account it must be, that he had a privilege (which the ancients say was peculiar to him,^p probably because more frequently made use of by him than by any others) to enter *εἰς τὰ ἅγια*, not into the *sancta sanctorum*, or “most holy of all,” but the *sanctuary*, or “holy place,” whither the priests of the Aaronical order might come. Prayer was his constant business and delight; he seemed to live upon it, and to trade in nothing but the frequent returns of converse with heaven; and was therefore wont to retire alone into the temple to pray, which he always performed kneeling, and with the greatest reverence, till by his daily devotions his knees were become as hard and brawny as a camel’s. And he who has told us that “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,”^q himself found it true by his own experience, heaven lending a more immediate ear to his petitions; so that when in a time of great drougt he prayed for rain, the heavens presently melted into fruitful showers.^r Nor was his charity towards men less than his piety towards God: he did good to all; watched over men’s souls, and studied to advance their eternal interests: his daily errand into the temple was to pray for the happiness of the people, and that God would not severely reckon with them: he could forgive his fiercest enemies,

^o Hæres. xxix. c. 4.

^p Hegesip. apud Euseb. loc. laudat. Epiphani. ubi supra.

^q James v. 17.

^r Epiph. Hæres. lxxviii. c. 14.

and "overcome evil with good:" when thrown from the top of the temple, he made use of all the breath he had left in him only to send up this petition to heaven for the pardon of his murderers: "I beseech thee, O Lord God, Heavenly Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

VII. He was of a most meek humble temper, honouring what was excellent in others, concealing what was valuable in himself: the eminency of his relation and the dignity of his place did not exalt him in lofty thoughts above the measures of his brethren, industriously hiding whatever might set him up above the rest. Though he was our Lord's brother, yet, in the inscription of his epistle, he styles himself but the "servant of the Lord Jesus," not so much as giving himself the title of an apostle. His temperance was admirable: he wholly abstained from flesh, and drank neither wine nor strong drink, nor ever used the bath: his holy and mortified mind was content with the meanest accommodations; he went barefoot, and never wore other than linen garments. Indeed, he lived after the strictest rules of the Nazarite order; and as the mitre, or sacerdotal plate, (*τὸ πέταλον*, the ancients call it,^s) which he wore upon his head, evinced his priesthood, which was rather after Melchisedek's, or the priesthood of the first-born, than the Aaronical order; so his never shaving his head, nor using unguents, his habit and diet, and the great severity of his life, shewed him to appertain to the Nazarite institution, to which he was holy, (says Hegesippus,) or consecrated from his mother's womb: a man of that divine temper, that he was the love and wonder of his age; and for the reputation of his holy and religious life was universally styled "James the Just." Indeed, the safety and happiness of the nation was reckoned to depend upon his prayers and interest in heaven, which gained him the honourable title of Oblias, or Ozliam, "the defence and fortress of the people;"^t as if, when he was gone, their garrisons would be dismantled, and their strength laid level with the ground. And so we find it was, when, some few years after his death, the Roman army broke in upon them, and turned all into blood and ruin. As what wonder if the judgments of God, like a flood, came rolling in upon

^s Epiph. Hæres. xxix. c. 4. ex Clem. Al. et Euseb. et Hæres. lxxviii. c. 13.

^t Hunc Hegeseppi locum feliciter sane emendat et restituit N. Fullerus noster. Miscellan. Sacr. l. iii. c. 1.

a nation, when the sluices are plucked up, and the Moses taken away that stood before in the gap to keep them out? "Elisha died, and a band of the Moabites invaded the land."^u In short, he was the delight of all good men; in so much favour and estimation with the people, that they used to flock after him,^x and strive who should touch, though it were but the hem of his garment; his very episcopal chair, wherein he used to sit, being (as Eusebius informs us^y) carefully preserved, and having a kind of veneration paid to it, even unto his time: loved and honoured, not by his friends only, but by his enemies; the Jews,^z in their Talmud, mentioning James, as a worker of miracles, in the name of "Jesus his Master;" yea, the wisest of them looked upon his martyrdom as the inlet to all those miseries and calamities that soon after flowed in upon them.^a Sure I am, that Josephus particularly reckons the death of this St. James, as that which more immediately alarmed the divine vengeance, and hastened the universal ruin and destruction of that nation.^b

VIII. He wrote only one epistle, probably not long before his martyrdom, as appears by some passages in it relating to the near approaching ruin of the Jewish nation. He directed it to the Jewish converts dispersed up and down those Eastern countries, to comfort them under sufferings, and confirm them against error. He saw a great degeneracy and declension of manners coming on, and that the purity of the Christian faith began to be undermined by the loose doctrines and practices of the Gnostics, who, under a pretence of zeal for the legal rites, generally mixed themselves with the Jews: he beheld libertinism marching on apace, and the way to heaven made soft and easy, men declaiming against good works as useless and unnecessary, and asserting a naked belief of the Christian doctrines to be sufficient to salvation. Against these, the apostle opposes himself; presses purity, patience, and charity, and all the virtues of a good life; and, by undeniable arguments, evinces, that that faith only that carries along with it obedience and an holy life, can justify us before God, and entitle us to eternal life. Besides this epistle, there is a kind of preparatory gospel ascribed to him, published under the name of *Πρωτευαγγέλιον*, (still extant at this day,)

^u 2 Kings xiii. 20.

^y Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 19.

^a Euseb. l. ii. c. 23.

^x Hieron. Com. in c. 1. ad Gal.

^z Vid. supr. n. 3.

^b Verba ejus cit. Euseb. loc. laudat.

containing the descent, birth, and first originals of Christ and the Virgin Mary ; at the end whereof, the author pretends to have written it at a time when Herod having raised a great tumult in Jerusalem, he was forced to retire into the wilderness. But though in many things consistent enough with the history of the gospels, yet has it ever been rejected as spurious and apocryphal, forged in that licentious age when men took the boldness to stamp any writing with the name of an apostle.

THE LIFE OF SAINT SIMON THE ZEALOT.

His kindred. Whence styled the Cananite, and the Zealot. An inquiry into the nature, and temper, and original of the sect of the Zealots among the Jews. An account of their wild and licentious practices. This no reflection upon our apostle. In what parts of the world he preached the gospel. His planting Christianity in Africa. His removal into the West, and preaching in Britain. His martyrdom there. By whom said to have preached and suffered in Persia. The difference between him and Symeon, bishop of Jerusalem.

ST. SIMON the Apostle was, as some think, one of the four brothers of our Saviour, sons of Joseph by his former marriage, though no other evidence appear for it, but that there was a Simon one of the number ; too infirm a foundation to build any thing more upon than a mere conjecture. In the catalogue of the apostles he is styled "Simon the Cananite;"^a whence some, led by no other reason, that I know of, than the bare sound of the name, have concluded him born at Cana in Galilee ; as for the same reason, others have made him the bridegroom,^b at whose marriage our Lord was there present, when he honoured the solemnity with his first miracle, turning water into wine. But this word has no relation to his country, or the place from whence he borrowed his original, as plainly descending from קנא or קנאד, which signify "zeal," and denote a hot and sprightly temper. Therefore what some of the evangelists call Cananite, others, rendering the Hebrew by the Greek word, style Simon Zelotes, or the Zealot :^c so called, not (as Nicephorus thinks^d) from his burning zeal, and ardent affection to his master, and his eager desire to advance his religion in the world, but from his warm active temper, and zealous forwardness in some particular way and profession of religion before his coming to our Saviour.

II. For the better understanding of this we are to know, that

^a Matt. x. 4. Mark iii. 18.

^c Luke vi. 15. Acts i. 13.

^b Niceph. Hist. Eccl. l. viii. c. 30.

^d Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 40.

as there were several sects and parties among the Jews, so was there one, either a distinct sect, or at least a branch of the Pharisees, called the sect of the Zealots:^e they were mighty assertors of the honour of the law, and the strictness and purity of religion, assuming a liberty to themselves to question notorious offenders, without staying for the ordinary formalities of law; nay, when they thought good, and when the case required, executing capital vengeance upon them. Thus when a blasphemer cursed God by the name of any idol, (says Maimonides,^f) the קנאים, or "Zealots," that next met him, might immediately kill him, without ever bringing him לביה דין before the "Sanhedrim." They looked upon themselves as the successors of Phineas, who, in a mighty passion for the honour of God, did immediate execution upon Zimri and Cozbi:^g an act which was "counted unto him for righteousness unto all posterities for evermore;" and God so well pleased with it, that he made "with him and his seed after him the covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for Israel." In imitation whereof these men took upon them to execute judgment in extraordinary cases, and that not only by the connivance, but with the leave both of the rulers and the people, till in aftertimes, under a pretence of this, their zeal degenerated into all manner of licentiousness and wild extravagance, and they not only became the pests of the commonwealth at home, but opened the door for the Romans to break in upon them, to their final and irrecoverable ruin: they were continually prompting the people to throw off the Roman yoke, and vindicate themselves into their native liberty; and when they had turned all things into hurry and confusion, themselves in the meanwhile fished in these troubled waters. Josephus gives a large account of them, and everywhere bewails them as the great plague of the nation. He tells us of them,^h that they scrupled not to rob any, to kill many of the prime of nobility, under pretence of holding correspondence with the Romans, and betraying the liberty of their country: openly glorying that herein they were the benefactors and saviours of the people. They abrogated the succession of ancient families, thrusting obscure and ignoble persons into the high-priest's office, that so they might oblige the most infamous

^e Suid. in voc. Ζηλωταί.

^g Psal. cvi. 30. Numb. xxv. 11—13.

^f De Idolol. c. 2. sect. 12.

^h De Bell. Jud. l. iv. c. 11, 12.

villains to their party; and, as if not content to injure men, they affronted heaven, and proclaimed defiance to the Divinity itself, breaking into and profaning the most holy place. Styling themselves Zealots, (says he,) “as if their undertakings were good and honourable, while they were greedy and emulous of the greatest wickedness, and outdid the worst of men.” Many attempts were made, especially by Annas, the high-priest, to reduce them to order and sobriety. But neither force of arms, nor fair and gentle methods, could do any good upon them: they held out, and went on in their violent proceedings; and joining with the Idumeans, committed all manner of outrage, slaying the high-priests themselves. Nay, when Jerusalem was straitly besieged by the Roman army, they ceased not to create tumults and factions within, and were indeed the main cause of the Jews’ ill success in that fatal war. It is probable, that all that went under the notion of this sect were not of this wretched and ungovernable temper, but that some of them were of a better make, of a more sober and peaceable disposition: and as it is not to be doubted, but that our Simon was of this sect in general, so there is reason to believe he was of the better sort. However, this makes no more reflection upon his being called to the apostleship, than it did for St. Matthew, who was before a publican, or St. Paul’s being a Pharisee, and so zealously persecuting the church of God.

III. Being invested in the apostolical office, no farther mention appears of him in the history of the gospel. Continuing with the apostles till their dispersion up and down the world, he then applied himself to the execution of his charge. He is said to have directed his journey towards Egypt,ⁱ thence to Cyrene and Africa, (this, indeed, Baronius is not willing to believe,^k being desirous that St. Peter should have the honour to be the first that planted Christianity in Africa,) and throughout Mauritania, and all Libya, preaching the gospel to those remote and barbarous countries. Nor could the coldness of the climate benumb his zeal, or hinder him from shipping himself and the Christian doctrine over to the Western islands, yea, even to Britain itself. Here he preached, and wrought many miracles; and after infinite troubles and difficulties which he underwent, (if we may believe our authors, whom though Baronius^l in this case makes

ⁱ Niceph. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 40.

^k Ad Ann. 44. n. 38.

^l Ibid.

no great account of, yet never scruples freely to use their verdict and suffrage when they give in evidence to his purpose,) suffered martyrdom for the faith of Christ; as is not only affirmed by Nicephorus^m and Dorotheus,ⁿ but expressly owned in the Greek Menologies,^o where we are told that he went at last into Britain, and having enlightened the minds of many with the doctrine of the gospel, was crucified by the infidels, and buried there.

IV. I know indeed that there want not those who tell us,^p that after his preaching the gospel in Egypt, he went into Mesopotamia, where he met with St. Jude the apostle, and together with him took his journey into Persia: where, having gained a considerable harvest to the Christian faith, they were both crowned with martyrdom; which Baronius himself confesses to be founded upon no better authority, than the "Passions of the Apostles," a book which at every turn he rejects as trifling and impertinent, as false and fabulous. But, however, wide is the mistake of those who confound our apostle with Symeon,^q the son of Cleophas, successor to St. James the Just in the see of Jerusalem, who was crucified in the hundred and twentieth year of his age, in the persecution under Trajan; the different character of their persons, and the account both of their acts and martyrdoms, being sufficiently distinguished in the writings of the church.

^m Niceph. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 40.

ⁿ Dorotheus. in Synops. de vit. Apost. p. 148.

^o Menolog. Græc. ad diem 10 Maii.

^p Vid. Breviar. Roman. ad diem 28 Octobr. et Martyrol. Rom. ad eund. diem et Baron. Not. ibid. vid. illum ad Ann. 68. n. 7.

^q Sophron. apud Hieron. de Script. Eccl. in Simone. Isidor. de vit. et obit. SS. utriusque Test. c. 83.

THE LIFE OF SAINT JUDE.

The several names attributed to him in the gospel. Thaddæus, whence. The custom of the Jews to alter their names, when bearing affinity with the great name Jehovah. The name Judas, why distasteful to the apostles. Lebbæus, whence derived. His parentage and relation to our Lord. The question put by him to Christ. Whether the same with Thaddæus sent to Edessa. In what places he preached. His death. His married condition. The story of his grandchildren brought before Domitian. His epistle, and why questioned of old. Its canonicalness vindicated. The book of Enoch, and what its authority. The contention between Michael and the devil about Moses's body, whence borrowed. St. Jude proved to be the author of this epistle. Grotius's conceit of its being written by a younger Jude, rejected. Its affinity with the second epistle of St. Peter. The design of it.

THERE are three several names by which this apostle is described in the history of the gospel, Jude, Thaddæus, and Lebbæus, it being usual, in the holy volumes, for the same person to have more proper names than one. For the first, it was a name common amongst the Jews, recommended to them as being the name of one of the great patriarchs of their nation. This name he seems to have changed afterwards for Thaddæus, a word springing from the same root, and of the very same import and signification ; which might arise from a double cause : partly from the superstitious veneration which the Jews had for the name Jehovah, (the *nomen τετραγράμματον*, or “name consisting of four letters,”) which they held unlawful to be pronounced by any but the high-priest, and not by him neither, but at the most solemn times. Hence it was, that when any man had a name, wherein there was the major part of the letters of this ineffable title, (and such was Jehuda, or Juda,) they would not rashly pronounce it in common usage, but chose rather to mould it into another like it, and of the same importance, or that which had a near affinity and resemblance with it ; partly from a particular dislike of the name of Judas among the apostles, the bloody and

treasonable practices of Judas Iscariot having rendered that name very odious and detestable to them. To prevent therefore all possibility of mistake, and that they might not confound the righteous with the wicked, St. Matthew and St. Mark never call him by this, but by some other name; as, no question, for the same reason, he both styles himself, and is frequently called by others, "Judas the brother of James;" and that this was one great design of it, the evangelist plainly intimates, when speaking of him, he says, "Judas, not Iscariot."^a For his name Lebbaeus, it seems to have been derived either from לב, "an heart," whence St. Jerome renders it *corculum*, probably to denote his wisdom and prudence; or else from לבי, "a lion," and therein to have respect to old Jacob's prophecy concerning Judah, "that he should be as a lion, as an old lion, and as a lion's whelp," which probably might have a main stroke in fastening this name upon St. Jude. From this patriarchal prophecy we are told,^b that one of the schools or synagogues of learned men among the Jews (who, to avoid confusion, were wont to distinguish themselves by different appellations) took occasion to denominate themselves *Labii*, as accounting themselves the scholars and descendants of this lion-like son of Jacob; and that St. Jude was of this society; and, because of his eminency among them, retained the title of Labius, or, as it was corruptly pronounced, Lebbaeus. I confess I should have thought the conjecture of a learned man very probable,^c that he might have derived this name from the place of his nativity, as being born at Lebba, a town which, he tells us, Pliny^d speaks of in the province of Galilee, not far from Carmel; but that it is not Lebba, but Jebba, in all copies of Pliny that I have seen. But let the reader please himself in which conjecture he likes best.

II. For his descent and parentage, he was of our Lord's kindred, Nicephorus truly making him the son of Joseph,^e and brother to James, bishop of Jerusalem: that there was a Jude, one of the number, is very evident; "are not his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?"^f which makes me the more to wonder at Scaliger,^g who so confidently denies that any of

^a John xiv. 22.

^c Lightf. H. Hebr. in Matt. p. 147.

^e Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 40.

^g Animadv. in Euseb. Chron. ad n. 2112. p. 205.

^b Bolduc. de Eccl. post leg. c. 7.

^d Hist. Nat. l. v. c. 19.

^f Matt. xiii. 55.

the evangelists ever mention a "Jude, the brother of our Lord." St. Jerome seems often to confound him with Simon the Zealot, whose title he ascribes to him ; though second thoughts set him right, as indeed common advertency could do no less, so plain is the account which the evangelists give of this matter. When called to the discipleship we find not, as not meeting with him till we find him enumerated in the catalogue of apostles ; nor is any thing particularly recorded of him afterwards, more than one question that he propounded to our Saviour ;^h who having told them what great things he and his Father would do, and what particular manifestations, after his resurrection, he would make of himself to his sincere disciples and followers, St. Jude, (whose thoughts, as well as the rest, were taken up with the expectations of a temporal kingdom of the Messiah,) not knowing how this could consist with the public solemnity of that glorious state they looked for, asked him, what was the reason that he would manifest himself to them, and not to the world ? Our Lord replied, that the world was not capable of these divine manifestations, as being a stranger and an enemy to what should fit them for fellowship with heaven ; that they were only good men, persons of a divine temper of mind, and religious observers of his laws and will, whom God would honour with these familiar converses, and admit to such particular acts of grace and favour.

III. Eusebius relates,ⁱ that soon after our Lord's ascension, St. Thomas despatched Thaddæus the apostle to Abgarus, governor of Edessa ; where he healed diseases, wrought miracles, expounded the doctrines of Christianity, and converted Abgarus and his people to the faith : for all which pains, when the toparch offered him vast gifts and presents, he refused them with a noble scorn, telling him, they had little reason to receive from others what they had freely relinquished and left themselves. A large account of this whole affair is extant in Eusebius, translated by him, out of Syriac, from the records of the city of Edessa. This Thaddæus, St. Jerome^k expressly makes to be our St. Jude, though his bare authority is not in this case sufficient evidence ; especially since Eusebius makes him no more than one of the seventy disciples, which he would scarce have done, had he been one of the twelve. He calls him indeed an apostle, but that

^h John xiv. 22.

ⁱ Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 13.

^k Comm. in Matt. c. 10.

may imply no more than, according to the large acceptation of the word, that he was a disciple, a companion, and an assistant to them, as we know the Seventy eminently were. Nor is any thing more common in ancient ecclesiastic writers, than for the first planters and propagators of Christian religion in any country to be honoured with the name and title of apostles. But however this be, at his first setting out to preach the gospel, he went up and down Judea and Galilee, then through Samaria into Idumea, and to the cities of Arabia, and the neighbour countries, and after to Syria and Mesopotamia. Nicephorus adds,^l that he came at last to Edessa, where Abgarus was governor, and where the other Thaddæus, one of the Seventy, had been before him. Here he perfected what the other had begun; and having, by his sermons and miracles, established the religion of our Saviour, died a peaceable and a quiet death; though Dorotheus makes him slain at Berytus,^m and honourably buried there. By the almost general consent of the writers of the Latin church, he is said to have travelled into Persia, where, after great success in his apostolical ministry for many years, he was at last, for his free and open reproving the superstitious rites and usages of the magi, cruelly put to death.

IV. That he was one of the married apostles sufficiently appears from his *υἱοὶ*, or "grandsons," mentioned by Eusebius,ⁿ of whom Hegesippus gives this account. Domitian the emperor, whose enormous wickednesses had awakened in him the quickest jealousies, and made him suspect every one that might look like a corrvial in the empire, had heard that there were some of the line of David, and Christ's kindred, that did yet remain. Two grandchildren of St. Jude, the brother of our Lord, were brought before him: having confessed that they were of the race and posterity of David, he asked what possessions and estate they had? they told him, that they had but a very few acres of land, out of the improvement whereof they both paid him tribute, and maintained themselves with their own hard labour, as by the hardness and callousness of their hands (which they then shewed him) did appear. He then inquired of them concerning Christ, and the state of his kingdom; what

^l Niceph. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 40.

^m Synops. de vit. et mort. App. in Bibl. Pp. vol. iii. p. 148.

ⁿ Apud Euseb. l. iii. c. 30.

kind of empire it was, and when and where it would commence. To which they replied, that his kingdom was not of this world, nor of the signories and dominions of it, but heavenly and angelical, and would finally take place in the end of the world; when, coming with great glory, he would judge the quick and the dead, and award all men recompenses according to their works. The issue was, that looking upon the meanness and simplicity of the men as below his jealousies and fears, he dismissed them, without any severity used against them; who being now beheld, not only as kinsmen, but as martyrs of our Lord, were honoured by all, preferred to places of authority and government in the church, and lived till the times of Trajan.

V. St. Jude left only one epistle, of catholic and universal concernment, inscribed at large to all Christians. It was some time before it met with general reception in the church,^o or was taken notice of. The author, indeed, styles not himself an apostle, but no more does St. James, St. John, nor sometimes St. Paul himself. And why should he fare the worse for his humility, only for calling himself the “servant of Christ,” when he might have added not only apostle, but “the brother of our Lord?” The best is, he has added what was equivalent, “Jude the brother of James,” a character that can belong to none but our apostle; beside that the title of the epistle, which is of great antiquity, runs thus, “The general Epistle of Jude the Apostle.” One great argument, as St. Jerome informs us,^p against the authority of this epistle of old, was its quoting a passage out of an apocryphal book of Enoch. This book, called the Apocalypse of Enoch, was very early extant in the church, frequently mentioned, and passages cited out of it by Irenæus, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, and others, some of whom accounted it little less than canonical.^q But what if our apostle had it not out of this apocryphal book, but from some prophecy current from age to age, handed to him by common tradition, or immediately revealed to him by the Spirit of God? But suppose it taken out of that book going under Enoch’s name, this makes nothing against the authority of the epistle; every thing, I hope, is not presently false, that is contained in an apocryphal and uncanonical writing, nor does the taking a single testimony out

^o Euseb. l. ii. c. 23. et l. iii. c. 25.

^p De Script. Eccl. in Juda.

^q Tertull. de Cult. Fœmin. l. i. c. 3. Vid. Hieron. Comment. in Tit. c. 1.

of it any more infer the apostle's approbation of all the rest, than St. Paul's quoting a good sentence or two out of Menander, Aratus, and Epimenides, imply that he approved all the rest of the writings of those heathen poets. And, indeed, nothing could be more fit and proper than this way, if we consider that the apostle in this epistle chiefly argues against the Gnostics, who mainly traded in such traditionary and apocryphal writings, and probably in this very book of Enoch. The same account may be given of that other passage in this epistle concerning the contention between Michael the Archangel and the devil about the burial of Moses's body, no where extant in the holy records, supposed to have been taken out of a Jewish writing called *פְּסִירַת מֹשֶׁה*, or the "dismissal of Moses," mentioned by some of the Greek fathers,^r under the title of *Ἀνάβασις Μωσέως*, or "the ascension of Moses," in which this passage was upon record. Nor is it any more a wonder that St. Jude should do this, than that St. Paul should put down Jannes and Jambres for the two magicians of Pharaoh that opposed Moses, which he must either derive from tradition, or fetch out of some uncanonical author of those times, there being no mention of their names in Moses's relation of that matter. But be these passages whence they will, it is enough to us, that the Spirit of God has made them authentic, and consecrated them part of the holy canon.

VI. Being thus satisfied in the canonicalness of this epistle, none but St. Jude could be the author of it; for who but he was the "brother of St. James?" a character by which he is described in the evangelical story more than once. Grotius,^s indeed, will needs have it written by a younger Jude, the fifteenth bishop of Jerusalem, in the reign of Adrian; and because he saw that that passage, "the brother of James," stood full in his way, he concludes, without any shadow of reason, that it was added by some transcriber. But is not this to make too bold with sacred things? is not this to indulge too great a liberty? this once allowed, it will soon open a door to the wildest and most extravagant conjectures, and no man shall know where to find sure footing for his faith. But the reader may remember what we have

^r Origen. *περὶ Ἀρχῶν*, l. iii. c. 2. Plurimi erant alii libri antiquitus sub nomine Moysis confecti, et in iis liber dictus *Ἀνάληψις Μωσέως*, memoratus Athan. in Synops. S. Script. s. 75. confer quæ ex hoc libro habet Clem. Alexandr. Strom. l. vi. c. 15.

^s Annot. in init. Epist. Jud.

elsewhere observed concerning the posthume annotations of that learned man. Not to say that there are many things in this epistle that evidently refer to the time of this apostle, and imply it to have been written upon the same occasion, and about the same time with the second epistle of Peter, between which and this there is a very great affinity both in words and matter ; nay, there want not some that endeavour to prove this epistle to have been written no less than twenty-seven years before that of Peter,[†] and that hence it was that Peter borrowed those passages that are so near akin to those in this epistle. The design of the epistle is to preserve Christians from the infection of Gnosticism, the loose and debauched principles vented by Simon Magus and his followers, whose wretched doctrines and practices he briefly and elegantly represents, persuading Christians heartily “to contend for the faith that had been delivered to them,” and to avoid these pernicious seducers as pests and firebrands, not to communicate with them in their sins, lest they perished with them in that terrible vengeance that was ready to overtake them.

[†] Bolduc. prælud. in Epist. Jud. p. 106. ad calcem lib. de Eccl. post leg.

THE LIFE OF SAINT MATTHIAS.

St. Matthias one of the Seventy. Judas Iscariot, whence. A bad minister nulls not the ends of his ministration. His worldly and covetous temper. His monstrous ingratitude. His betraying his Master, and the aggravations of the sin. The distraction and horror of his mind. The miserable state of an evil and guilty conscience. His violent death. The election of a new apostle: the candidates, who. The lot cast upon Matthias. His preaching the gospel, and in what parts of the world. His martyrdom, when, where, and how. His body, whither translated. The gospel and traditions vented under his name.

ST. MATTHIAS not being an apostle of the first election, immediately called and chosen by our Saviour, particular remarks concerning him are not to be expected in the history of the gospel. He was one of our Lord's disciples (and probably one of the Seventy) that had attended on him the whole time of his public ministry, and after his death was elected into the apostleship upon this occasion. Judas Iscariot (so called, probably, from the place of his nativity, *איש קריית*, "a man of Kerioth," a city anciently situate in the tribe of Judah) had been one of the twelve, immediately called by Christ to be one of his intimate disciples, equally empowered and commissioned with the rest to preach and work miracles, "was numbered with them, and had obtained part of their ministry." And yet all this while was a man of vile and corrupt designs, branded with no meaner a character than thief and murderer: to let us see that there may be bad servants in Christ's own family, and that the wickedness of a minister does not evacuate his commission, nor render his office useless and ineffectual. The unworthiness of the instrument hinders not the ends of ministration: seeing the efficacy of an ordinance depends not upon the quality of the person, but the divine institution, and the blessing which God has entailed upon it. Judas preached Christ, no doubt, with zeal and fervency, and, for any thing we know, with as much success as the rest of

the apostles; and yet he was a bad man, a man acted by sordid and mean designs, one that had prostituted religion and the honour of his place to covetousness and evil arts. The love of money had so entirely possessed his thoughts, that his resolutions were bound for nothing but interest and advantage. "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare." This covetous temper betrayed him, as in the issue to the most fatal end, so to the most desperate attempt, ἄγος τὸ πάντων ἀνοσιώτατον, as Origen calls the putting Christ to death,* the most prodigious impiety that the sun ever shone on; the betraying his innocent Lord into the hands of those, who he knew would treat him with all the circumstances of insolent scorn and cruelty. How little does kindness work upon a disingenuous mind! It was not the honour of the place, to which, when thousands of others were passed by, our Lord had called him, the admitting him into a free and intimate fellowship with his person, the taking him to be one of his peculiar domestics and attendants, that could divert the wretch from his wicked purpose. He knew how desirous the great men of the nation were to get Christ into their hands, especially at the time of the passover, that he might with the more public disgrace be sacrificed before all the people, and therefore bargains with them, and for no greater a sum than under four pounds, to betray the Lamb of God into the paws of these wolves and lions: in short, he heads the party, conducts the officers, and sees him delivered into their hands.

II. But there is an active principle in man's breast, that seldom suffers daring sinners to pass in quiet to their graves. Awakened with the horror of the fact, conscience began to rouse and follow close, and the man was unable to bear up under the furious revenges of his own mind: as indeed all wilful and deliberate sins, and especially the guilt of blood, are wont more sensibly to alarm the natural notions of our minds, and to excite in us the fears of some present vengeance that will seize upon us. And how intolerable are those scourges that lash us in this vital and tender part? The spirit of the man sinks under him, and all supports snap asunder: as what ease or comfort can he enjoy, that carries a vulture in his bosom, always gnawing and preying upon his heart? which made Plutarch compare an evil

* Contr. Cels. l. iv. s. 22.

conscience to a cancer in the breast, that perpetually gripes and stings the soul with the pains of an intolerable repentance.^b Guilt is naturally troublesome and uneasy; it disturbs the peace and serenity of the mind, and fills the soul with storms and thunder. “Did ever any harden himself against God, and prosper?”^c And indeed how should he, when God has such a powerful and invisible executioner in his own bosom? Whoever rebels against the laws of his duty, and plainly affronts the dictates of his conscience, does that moment bid adieu to all true repose and quiet, and expose himself to the severe resentments of a self-tormenting mind. And though by secret arts of wickedness he may be able, possibly, to drown and stifle the voice of it for awhile, yet every little affliction or petty accident will be apt to awaken it into horror, and to let in terror, like an armed man, upon him: a torment infinitely beyond what the most ingenious tyrants could ever contrive. Nothing so effectually invades our ease, as the reproaches of our own minds. The wrath of man may be endured, but the irruptions of conscience are irresistible: it is τῷ συνειδότη ἀπάγχεσθαι, (as Chrysostom very elegantly styles it,) “to be choked or strangled with an evil conscience,” which oft reduces the man to such distresses, as to make him choose death rather than life. A sad instance of all which we have in this unhappy man: who, being wearied with furious and melancholy reflections upon what was past, threw back the wages of iniquity in open court, and despatched himself by a violent death; vainly hoping to take sanctuary in the grave, and that he should meet with that ease in another world which he could not find in this. “He departed, and went and hanged himself, and falling down burst asunder, and his bowels gushed out:” leaving a memorable warning to all treacherous and ungrateful, to all greedy and covetous persons, not to let the world insinuate itself too far into them; and indeed to all, “to watch and pray that they enter not into temptation.” Our present state is slippery and insecure; “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.” What privileges can be a sufficient fence, a foundation firm enough to rely upon, when the miracles, sermons, favours, and familiar converses of Christ

^b Plut. de Anim. tranquil. p. 476. Pythag. in aur. carm. ubi vide Hierocl. in loco.

^c Job ix. 4.

himself could not secure one of the apostles from so fatal an apostasy?

III. A vacancy being thus made in the college of apostles, the first thing they did after their return from mount Olivet, where our Lord took his leave of them, to St. John's house in mount Sion, (the place, if we may believe Nicephorus,^d where the church met together,) was to fill up their number with a fit proper person. To which purpose, Peter acquainted them that Judas, according to the prophetic prediction, being fallen from his ministry, it was necessary that another should be substituted in his room; one that had been a constant companion and disciple of the holy Jesus, and consequently capable of bearing witness to his life, death, and resurrection. Two were propounded in order to the choice, Joseph called Barsabas and Justus, (whom some make the same with Joses, one of the brothers of our Lord,) and Matthias, both duly qualified for the place. The way of election was by lots, a way frequently used both among Jews and Gentiles for the determination of doubtful and difficult cases, and especially the choosing judges and magistrates: and this way was here taken (says one of the ancients^e) on purpose to comply with the old custom observed among the Jews, that in the election of an apostle they might not seem to depart from the way that had been used under the legal state. The Pseudo-Dionysius, author of the Ecclesiastic Hierarchy,^f together with his two Paraphrasts,^g expressly says, that it was not a lot that was used in this case, to determine the matter, but *θεαρχικόν τι δῶρον*, or *σύμβολόν τι ἐξ ἀποκαλύψεως*, some immediate and extraordinary sign from heaven falling upon the candidate, and discovering him to be the person chosen by God. But this is directly contrary to the very words of the sacred story, which say, that "they gave forth the lots, and that the lot fell upon Matthias." And this course the apostles the rather took, because the Holy Ghost was not yet given,^h by whose immediate dictates and inspirations they were chiefly guided afterwards. And that the business might proceed with the greater regularity and success, they first solemnly make their address to heaven, that the omniscient Being that governed the world, and

^d Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 1.

^f De Eccles. Hierarch. c. 5. a. 5.

^h Chrysost. in loc.

^e Ambros. in Luc. c. 1.

^g Maxim. Pachym. in loc.

perfectly understood the tempers and dispositions of men, would immediately guide and direct the choice, and shew which of these two he would appoint to take that part of the apostolic charge from which Judas was so lately fallen. The lots being put into the urn, Matthias's name was drawn out, and thereby the apostolate devolved upon him.

IV. Not long after, the promised powers of the Holy Ghost were conferred upon the apostles, to fit them for that great and difficult employment upon which they were sent; and, among the rest, St. Matthias betook himself to his charge and province. The first-fruits of his ministry he spent in Judea, where having reaped a considerable harvest, he betook himself to other provinces. An author,¹ I confess, of no great credit in these matters, tells us, that he preached the gospel in Macedonia, where the Gentiles, to make an experiment of his faith and integrity, gave him a poisonous and intoxicating potion, which he cheerfully drank off, in the name of Christ, without the least prejudice to himself; and that when the same potion had deprived above two hundred and fifty of their sight, he, laying his hands upon them, restored them to their sight: with a great deal more of the same stamp, which I have neither faith enough to believe, nor leisure enough to relate. The Greeks, with more probability, report him to have travelled eastward: he came (says Nicephorus²) into the first, (says Sophronius)¹ into the second, Ethiopia; and in both, I believe, it is a mistake, either of the authors or transcribers, for Cappadocia; his residence being principally near the irruption of the river Apsarus and the haven Hyssus, both places in Cappadocia. Nor is there any Ethiopia nearer those places than that conterminous to Chaldea, whereof before. And as for those that tell us, that he might well enough preach both in the Asian and African Ethiopia, and that both might be comprehended under that general name, as the Eastern and Western parts of the world were heretofore contained under the general title of the Indies, it is a fancy without any other ground to stand on than their own bare conjecture. The place whither he came was very barbarous, and his usage was accordingly. For here, meeting with a people of a fierce and intractable temper, he was treated by them with

¹ Petr. de Natal. Hist. Sanct. l. iii. c. 149.

² Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 30,

¹ Ap. Hieron. de Script. Eccl. in Matthia.

great rudeness and inhumanity; from whom, after all his labours and sufferings, and a numerous conversion of men to Christianity, he obtained at last the crown of martyrdom, Ann. Chr. 61, or, as others, 64. Little certainty can be retrieved concerning the manner of his death. Dorotheus will have him to die at Sebastople,^m and to be buried there near the temple of the Sun. An ancient Martyrology reports him to have been seized by the Jews,ⁿ and, as a blasphemer, to have been first stoned and then beheaded. But the Greek Offices,^o seconded herein by several ancient Breviaries, tell us that he was crucified; and that as Judas was hanged upon a tree, so Matthias suffered upon a cross. His body is said to have been kept a long time at Jerusalem, thence thought by Helen, the mother of the great Constantine, to have been translated to Rome, where some parts of it are shewed with great veneration at this day. Though others,^p with as great eagerness, and probably as much truth, contend that his relics were brought to, and are still preserved at Triers in Germany; a controversy wherein I shall not concern myself. His memory is celebrated in the Greek church, August the 9th, as appears not only from their Menologies, but from a novel constitution of Manuel Comnenus,^q appointing what holy days should be kept in the church; while the Western churches keep February the 24th sacred to his memory. Among many other apocryphal writings attributed to the apostles, there was a gospel published under his name, mentioned by Eusebius and the ancients,^r and condemned with the rest by Gelasius bishop of Rome,^s as it had been rejected by others before him: under his name also there were extant traditions, cited by Clemens of Alexandria,^t from whence, no question, it was, that the Nicolaitans borrowed that saying of his, which they abused to so vile and beastly purposes; as under the pretended patronage of his name and doctrines, the Marcionites and Valentinians defended some of their most absurd and impious opinions.^u

^m Synops. de vit. App. in Bibl. Pp. vol. iii. p. 148.

ⁿ Colon. Impress. 1490. ad Febr. 24.

^o Menæon Græc. ad diem 9 August. apud Bolland. de vit. SS. ad Febr. 24.

^p Vid. Chr. Brower. Annal. Treverens. l. ii. p. 658. et scriptores ex utraque parte contendentes ap. Bolland. loc. cit.

^q Extat. in Jur. Gr. Rom. l. ii. p. 161.

^r Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 25. Orig. in Luc. Hom. x. Ambr. præf. in Luc.

^s Decr. par. i. dist. 15. cap. Sanct. Rom. Sect. Cæterum.

^t Strom. l. ii. c. 9. et l. iii. c. 4.

^u Ibid. l. vii. c. 17.

THE LIFE OF SAINT MARK

THE EVANGELIST.

His kindred, and distinction from others of the same name. Whether one of the Seventy. His conversion. His attendance upon Peter, and preaching the gospel in Italy and at Rome. His planting Christianity at Alexandria, and great success there. An account of the Therapeutæ, (mentioned by Philo,) and their excellent manners, rules, and way of life. These proved not to have been Christians by several arguments. The original of the mistake, whence. St. Mark's preaching in the parts of Africa. His return to Alexandria, and diligence in his ministry. The manner of his martyrdom. The time of it inquired into. The description of his person. His gospel, when and where written, and why said to be Peter's. His great impartiality in his relations. In what language written. The original, whether extant at this day.

ST. MARK, though carrying something of Roman in his name, probably assumed by him upon some great change or accident of his life, or, which was not unusual among the Jews, when going into the European provinces of the Roman empire, taken up at his going for Italy and Rome, was doubtless born of Jewish parents, originally descended of the tribe of Levi,^a and the line of the priesthood, and (if Nicephorus say true ^b) sister's son to Peter; though by others, against all reason, confounded with John surnamed Mark the son of Mary, and Mark, sister's son to Barnabas. By the ancients he is generally thought to have been one of the seventy disciples, and Epiphanius expressly tells us,^c that he was one of those who, taking exception at our Lord's discourse of "eating his flesh and drinking his blood," went back and walked no more with him," but was seasonably reduced and reclaimed by Peter. But no foundation appears either for the one or for the other; nay, Papias, bishop of Hierapolis,^d who lived near those times, positively affirms that

^a Hieron. præf. in Marc.

^c Hæres. li. c. 6.

^b Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 43.

^d Apud Euseb. l. iii. c. 39.

he was no hearer nor follower of our Saviour. He was converted by some of the apostles, and probably by St. Peter, who is said to have been his undertaker at his baptism, (if I understand Isidore aright,^e) for no other reason, I suppose, but because he calls him his son. Indeed, he was his constant attendant in his travels, supplying the place of an amanuensis and interpreter; for though the apostles were divinely inspired, and among other miraculous powers had the gift of languages conferred upon them, yet was the "interpretation of tongues" a gift more peculiar to some than others. This might probably be St. Mark's talent, in expounding St. Peter's discourses, whether by word or writing, to those who understood not the language wherein they were delivered. He accompanied him in his apostolical progress, preached the gospel in Italy and at Rome,^f where, at the request of the Christians of those parts, he composed and wrote his gospel.

II. By Peter he was sent into Egypt to plant Christianity in those parts, fixing his main residence at Alexandria, and the places thereabouts; where so great (says Eusebius^g) was the success of his ministry, that he converted multitudes both of men and women, not only to the embracing of the Christian religion, but to a more than ordinary strict profession of it, inso-much that Philo wrote a book of their peculiar rites and way of life, the only reason why St. Jerome reckons him among the writers of the church.^h Indeed, Philo the Jew wrote a book *περὶ βίου θεωρητικοῦ*, extant at this day, wherein he speaks of a sort of persons called *Θεραπευταί*, who in many parts of the world, but especially in a pleasant place near the Maræotic Lake in Egypt, had formed themselves into religious societies; and gives a large account of their rites and customs, their strict, philosophical, and contemplative course of life. He tells us of them,ⁱ that when they first enter upon this way, they renounce all secular interests and employments, and, leaving their estates to their relations, retire into groves and gardens, and places devoted to solitude and contemplation; that they had their houses or colleges not contiguous, that so being free from noise and tumult, they might the better minister to the designs of a con-

^e Petri discipulus, et in baptisinate filius. Isid. de vit. et ob. SS. c. 84.

^f Naz. Orat. xxv. p. 438.

^g Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 16.

^h De Script. Eccl. in Philone.

ⁱ Phil. lib. de vita contemplat. p. 891, 892. et seq.

templative life; nor yet removed at too great a distance, that they might maintain mutual society, and be conveniently capable of helping and assisting one another. In each of these houses there was an oratory, called *Σεμνεῖον* and *Μοναστήριον*, wherein they discharged the more secret and solemn rites of their religion; divided in the middle with a partition-wall three or four cubits high, the one apartment being for the men, and the other for the women: here they publicly met every seventh day; where being set according to their seniority, and having composed themselves with great decency and reverence, the most aged person among them, and best skilled in the *dogmata* and principles of their institution, came forth into the midst, gravely and soberly discoursing what might make the deepest impression upon their minds; the rest attending with a profound silence, and only testifying their assent with the motion of their eyes or head. Their discourses were usually mystical and allegorical, seeking hidden senses under plain words; and of such an allegorical philosophy consisted the books of their religion, left them by their ancestors: the law they compared to an animal, the letter of it resembling the body, while the soul of it lay in those abstruse and recondite notions which the external veil and surface of the words concealed from vulgar understandings. He tells us also, that they took very little care of the body, perfecting their minds by precepts of wisdom and religion; the day they entirely spent in pious and divine meditations, in reading and expounding the law and the prophets, and the holy volumes of the ancient founders of their sect, and in singing hymns to the honour of their Maker: absolutely temperate and abstemious, neither eating nor drinking till night, the only time they thought fit to refresh and regard the body; some of them, out of an insatiable desire of growing in knowledge and virtue, fasting many days together. What diet they had was very plain and simple, sufficient only to provide against hunger and thirst; a little bread, salt, and water being their constant bill of fare: their clothes were as mean as their food, designed only as a present security against cold and nakedness; and this not only the case of men, but of pious and devout women that lived (though separately) among them: that they religiously observed every seventh day, and especially the preparatory week to the great solemnity, which they kept with all expressions of a more

severe abstinence and devotion. This, and much more, he has in that tract concerning them.

III. These excellent persons Eusebius peremptorily affirms to have been Christians, converted and brought under these admirable rules and institutions of life by St. Mark at his coming hither, accommodated all passages to the manners and discipline of Christians: followed herein by Epiphanius,^k Jerome,^l and others of old, as by Baronius,^m and some others of later time: and this so far taken for granted, that many have hence fetched the rise of monasteries and religious orders among Christians.ⁿ But whoever seriously and impartially considers Philo's account, will plainly find that he intends it of Jews and professors of the Mosaic religion, though whether Essenes, or of some other particular sect among them, I stand not to determine. That they were not Christians, is evident: besides that Philo gives not the least intimation of it, partly because it is improbable that Philo, being a Jew, should give so great a character and commendation of Christians, so hateful to the Jews at that time in all places of the world; partly, in that Philo speaks of them as an institution of some considerable standing, whereas Christians had but lately appeared in the world, and were later come into Egypt; partly, because many parts of Philo's account do no way suit with the state and manners of Christians at that time; as that they withdrew themselves from public converse, and all affairs of civil life, which Christians never did, but when forced by violent persecutions; for ordinarily, as Justin Martyr and Tertullian tell us, they promiscuously dwelt in towns and cities, ploughed their lands, and followed their trades, ate and drank, and were clothed and habited, like other men. So when he says, that besides the books of Moses and the prophets, they had the writings of the ancient authors of their sect and institution; this cannot be meant of Christians: for though Eusebius would understand it of the writings of the evangelists and apostles, yet, besides that they were few of them published when Philo wrote this discourse, they were however of too late an edition to come under the character of ancient authors. Not to say that some of their rites and customs were such, as the Christians of those days were mere strangers to, not taken up by the Christian

^k Hæres. xxix. c. 5.

^l De Script. in Philone.

^m Ad Ann. 64. n. 11.

ⁿ Sozom. Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 12. Cassian. de Instit. Monach. l. ii. c. 5.

church till many years, and some of them not till some ages after. Nay, some of them never used by any of the primitive Christians :^o such were their "religious dances," which they had at their festival solemnities, especially that great one which they held at the end of every seven weeks ; when their entertainment being ended, they all rose up, the men in one company, and the women in another, dancing with various measures and motions, each company singing divine hymns and songs, and having a precentor going before them, now one singing, and anon another, till in the conclusion they joined in one common chorus, in imitation of the triumphant song sung by Moses and the Israelites after their deliverance at the Red Sea. To all which let me add, what a learned man has observed,^p that the Essenes (if Philo means them) were great physicians, (thence probably called *Θεραπευταί*, "healers;" though Philo,^q who is apt to turn all things into allegory, refers it only to their curing, *τὰς ψυχὰς νόσοις κεκρατημέναις χαλεπαῖς καὶ δυσιάτοις, ἃς κατέσκηψαν ἡδοναὶ καὶ ἐπιθυμίαι, καὶ, τῶν ἄλλων παθῶν, καὶ κακιῶν ἀνήνυτον πλῆθος*, "the souls of men infected and overrun with difficult and desperate distempers, created by pleasures and extravagant appetites, and a long train of other lusts and passions.") Josephus reporting of them,^r that they accurately study the writings of the ancients, excerpting thence whatever is conducive either to soul or body ; and that for the curing of diseases, they diligently inquired into the virtues of roots and stones that were most proper to drive away distempers. An account no ways agreeing with the Christians of those times, who miraculously cured diseases without the arts of physic, or any other preparations than calling the name of Christ over the afflicted person. Doubtless that which led Eusebius into the mistake, was the conformity that he observed between the Christian *Ἀσκηταί*, in and before his time, who entered upon a more strict and severe course of life, and these *Therapeutæ* described by Philo ; an ordinary fancy being able to draw a fair parallel between them, and so it was but removing them some ages higher, and imagining them to have been converted and founded by St. Mark, and the work was done. Indeed, it is not to be doubted, but that persons

^o Phil. lib. de vit. contemplat. p. 901, 902.

^p N. Full. Miscell. Sacr. l. i. c. 3.

^q Lib. supr. citat. p. 889.

^r De Bell. Jud. l. ii. c. 12.

educated under these excellent rules and methods of life, were more than ordinarily prepared for the reception of Christianity, (between which and their principles and rules of life there was so great an affinity and agreement,) which must needs render our evangelist's success great in those parts, and open the way for men to come flocking over to the faith.

IV. St. Mark did not confine his preaching to Alexandria, and the Oriental parts of Egypt, but removed westward to the parts of Libya,^s going through the countries of Marmarica, Pentapolis, and others thereabouts; where, though the people were both barbarous in their manners and idolatrous in their worship, yet by his preaching and miracles he made way for the entertainment of the gospel, and left them not, till he had not only gained them to, but confirmed them in the profession of it.^t Returning to Alexandria, he preached freely, and ordered and disposed the affairs of the church, and wisely provided for succession by constituting governors and pastors of it. But the restless enemy of the souls of men would not long suffer him to be quiet: it was the time of Easter, at what time the great solemnities of Serapis happened to be celebrated, when the minds of the people being excited to a passionate vindication of the honour of their idol, broke in upon St. Mark, then engaged in the solemn celebration of divine worship, and binding his feet with cords, dragged him through the streets and the most craggy places to the Bucelus, a precipice near the sea, and for that night thrust him into prison, where his soul was by a divine vision erected and encouraged under the ruins of his shattered body.^u Early the next morning, the tragedy began again, dragging him about in the same manner; till his flesh being raked off, and his blood run out, his spirits failed, and he expired. But their malice died not with him: Metaphrastes adds, that they burnt his body, whose bones and ashes the Christians there decently entombed near the place where he was wont to preach. His body, at least the remains of it, were afterwards with great pomp removed from Alexandria to Venice, where they are religiously honoured, and he adopted as the tutelar-saint and patron of that state; and one of the richest and stateliest churches erected to his memory that

^s S. Metaphr. Martyr. S. Marc. apud Sur. ad diem 25 Apr. Procop. Diac. laudat. S. Marc. ib. n. 8. Niceph. Hist. Eccl. l. ii. c. 43.

^t Id. Ibid.

^u Vid. vit. MS. Arabice script. ap. Kirsten. p. 37.

the world can boast of at this day. He suffered in the month Pharmuthi, on the twenty-fifth of April, though the certain year of his martyrdom is not precisely determined by the ancients. Kirstenius,^x out of the Arabic Memoirs of his Life, says, it was in the fourteenth of the last year of Claudius: St. Jerome places it in the eighth of Nero.^y But extravagantly wide is Dorotheus's computation,^z who makes him to suffer in the time of Trajan, with as much truth as Nicephorus,^a on the other hand, affirms him to have come into Egypt in the reign of Tiberius. If in so great variety of opinions I may interpose my conjecture, I should reckon him to have suffered about the end of Nero's reign: for supposing him to have come with St. Peter to Rome about the fifth or sixth year of Nero, he might thence be despatched to Alexandria, and spend the residue of his life, and of that emperor's reign, in planting Christianity in those parts of the world. Sure I am, that Irenæus reports St. Mark to have outlived Peter and Paul,^b and that after their decease he composed his gospel out of those things which he had heard Peter preach. But whatever becomes of that, it is evident that Irenæus supposed (whose supposition certainly was not founded upon mere fancy and conjecture) that St. Mark for some considerable time survived the martyrdom of those two great apostles: a passage that so troubled Christopherson, (one of those who in these latter ages first translated Eusebius into Latin,) because crossing the accounts of their writers in this matter, that he chose rather to expunge the word, "decease," and substitute another of a quite different sense, expressly contrary to the faith of all ancient copies, and to the most ancient version of Irenæus itself. But to return. St. Mark, as to his person, was of a middle size and stature, his nose long, his eye-brows turning back, his eyes graceful and amiable, his head bald, his beard prolix and gray, his gait quick, the constitution of his body strong and healthful.

V. His gospel, the only book he left behind him, was, as before we observed, written at the entreaty of the converts at Rome, who not content to have heard Peter preach, pressed St.

^x Ubi supra.

^y De script. Eccl. in Marc.

^z Synops. de vit. et mort. App. in Bibl. Pp. vol. iii. p. 148. col. 2.

^a Lib. ii. c. 43.

^b Adv. Hæres. l. iii. c. 1. citat. etiam ap. Euseb. l. v. c. 8.

^c Metaphr. ubi supra, n. 10. Niceph. l. ii. c. 43.

^d Clem. Al. Hypotyp. l. vi. ap. Euseb. l. ii. c. 15. Papias, ibid. l. iii. c. 39.

Mark, his disciple, that he would commit to writing an historical account of what he had delivered to them : which he performed with no less faithfulness than brevity ; all which St. Peter perused, ratified with his authority, and commanded to be publicly read in their religious assemblies. And though, as we noted but now, Irenæus seems to intimate that it was written after Peter's death, yet all that can be inferred hence will be, what in itself is a matter of no great moment and importance, that the ancients were not agreed in assigning the exact time when the several gospels were published to the world. If we will give way to the conjectures of a learned man,^e the difficulty will soon cease : he tells us, that the *μετὰ τούτων ἐξοδον*, in Irenæus, should be rendered, not "after their death," but "after their departure," viz. from Rome. And though this be not the common usage of the word, yet might it have been admitted, had there been any authority of the ancients to prove that St. Peter was twice at Rome. Therefore, not relying upon this, he flies to an ancient copy, where the words are read, *μετὰ τούτου ἔκδοσιν*, "after the publication of St. Matthew's gospel," whereof Irenæus had spoken in the words before. But he should have done well to have named his ancient copy, no such having been hitherto mentioned by any other writer. And therefore it leaves a suspicion, that he had no better authority than the boldness of Christopherson, who indeed thrusts such a conjecture into the margin of his book, and accordingly so renders it in his translation, with what design we observed before. But to return. It was frequently styled St. Peter's gospel,^f not so much because dictated by him to St. Mark, as because he principally composed it out of that account which St. Peter usually delivered in his discourses to the people. Which, probably, is the reason of what Chrysostom observes,^g that in his style and manner of expression he delights to imitate St. Peter, representing much in a few words. Though he commonly reduces the story of our Saviour's acts into a narrower compass than St. Matthew, yet want there not passages which he relates more largely than he. The last chapter of his gospel, at least part of it, was (as Jerome informs us^h) wanting in all ancient Greek copies, rejected upon pretence of some disagreement with the other gospels ; though, as he there

^e Grot. Annot. in proem. Marc.

^g Hom. iv. in Matt. s. l. vol. vii. p. 46.

^f Vid. Pap. loc. supr. citat.

^h Ad Hedib. Quest. 3.

shews, they are fairly consistent with each other. His great impartiality in his relations appears from hence, that he is so far from concealing the shameful lapse and denial of Peter, his dear tutor and master, that he sets it down with some particular circumstances and aggravations which the other evangelists take no notice of.¹ Some dispute has been made in what language it was written, whether in Greek or Latin; that which seems to give most countenance to the Latin original, is the note that we find at the end of the Syriac version of this gospel, where it is said that Mark preached and declared his holy gospel at Rome, in the Roman or the Latin tongue: an evidence that, with me, would almost carry the force of a demonstration, were I assured that this note is of equal value and authority with that ancient version, generally supposed to come very few centuries short of the apostolic age: but we know how usual it is for such additions to be made by some later hand. And what credit is to be given to the subscriptions at the end of St. Paul's epistles, we have shewed elsewhere. Besides, that it is not here said that he wrote, but that he preached his gospel at Rome in that language. The advocates of the Romish church plead, that it is very congruous and suitable, that it should at first be consigned to writing in that language, being principally designed for the use of the Christians at Rome. An objection that will easily vanish, when we consider, that as the convert Jews there understood very little Latin, so there were very few Romans that understood not Greek, it being (as appears from the writers of that age) the genteel and fashionable language of those times. Nor can any good reason be assigned, why it should be more inconvenient for St. Mark to write his gospel in Greek for the use of the Romans, than that St. Paul should, in the same language, write his epistle to that church. The original Greek copy, written with St. Mark's own hand, is said to be extant at Venice at this day: written (they tell us^k) by him at Aquileia, and thence, after many hundreds of years, translated to Venice, where it is still preserved, though the letters so worn out with length of time, that they are not capable of being read: a story which as I cannot absolutely disprove, so I am not very forward to believe, and that for more reasons than I think worth while to insist on in this place.

¹ Chrysost. Hom. lxxxv. (al. lxxxvi.) in Matt. s. 1. vol. vii. p. 805.

^k Corn. a Lap. præfat. in Marc.

THE LIFE OF SAINT LUKE

THE EVANGELIST.

Antioch St. Luke's birthplace. The fame and dignity of it. His learned and liberal education. His study of physic. His skill in painting. St. Luke none of the Seventy. Converted, where, and by whom. His constant attendance upon St. Paul. In what parts he principally exercised his ministry. The place and manner of his death. The translation of his body to Constantinople. His writings. Theophilus, who. His gospel, where written, and upon what occasion. How fitted for it. The Acts of the Apostles written at Rome, and when. Why principally containing the acts of St. Paul. This book why publicly read just after Easter in the primitive church. St. Luke's polite and exact style and way of writing above the rest.

ST. LUKE was born at Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, a city celebrated for its extraordinary blessings and eminences, the pleasantness of its situation, the fertility of its soil, the riches of its traffic, the wisdom of its senate, the learning of its professors, the civility and politeness of its inhabitants, by the pens of some of the greatest orators of their times :^a and yet, above all these, renowned for this one peculiar honour, that here it was that "the disciples were first called Christians." It was an university, replenished with schools of learning, wherein were professors of all arts and sciences. So that being born in the very lap of the Muses, he could not well miss of an ingenuous and liberal education; his natural parts meeting with the advantages of great improvements. Nay, we are told,^b that he studied not only at Antioch, but in all the schools both of Greece and Egypt, whereby he became accomplished in all parts of learning and human sciences. Being thus furnished out with skill in all the preparatory institutions of philosophy, he more particularly applied him-

^a Dion. Chrysost. Orat. xlvii. de Patria Liban. Orat. xi. cui tit. Ἀντιόχεικος. vol. ii. Chrysost. Encom. Antioch. Chrysost. Hom. xvii. ad Pop. Antioch. s. 2. vol. ii. p. 176.

^b S. Metaphr. apud Sur. ad diem 18 Octob.

self to the study of physic, for which the Grecian academies were most famous; though they that hence infer the quality of his birth and fortunes, forget to consider, that this noble art was in those times generally managed by persons of no better rank than servants: upon which account a learned man conceives St. Luke,^c though a Syrian by birth, to have been a servant at Rome, where he sometimes practised physic, and whence being manumitted, he returned into his own country, and probably continued his profession all his life: it being so fairly consistent with, and in many cases so subservient to, the ministry of the gospel and the care of souls. Besides his abilities in physic, he is said to have been very skilful in painting,^d and there are no less than three or four several pieces still in being, pretended to have been drawn with his own hand: a tradition which Gretser^e the Jesuit sets himself, with a great deal of pains, and to very little purpose, to defend; though his authors, either in respect of credit or antiquity, deserve very little esteem and value. Of more authority with me would be an ancient inscription found in a vault near the church of St. Mary *in via lata* at Rome, supposed to have been the place where St. Paul dwelt, wherein mention is made of a picture of the blessed Virgin,^f *una ex vii. ab Luca depictis*, “being one of the seven painted by St. Luke.”

II. He was a Jewish proselyte, Antioch abounding with men of that nation, who had here their synagogues and schools of education; so that we need not, with Theophylact,^g send him to Jerusalem to be instructed in the study of the law. As for that opinion of Epiphanius and others,^h that he was one of the seventy disciples, one of those that deserted our Lord for the unwelcome discourse he made to them, but recalled afterwards by St. Paul, I behold it as a story of the same coin and stamp with that of St. Mark's leaving Christ upon the same occasion, and being reduced by Peter, and that the one was made to answer the other; as upon no better ground it is said, that he was one of those two disciples that were going to Emmaus.ⁱ For besides the

^c Grot. Annot. in Luc. i.

^d Metaphr. ubi supra. Niceph. l. ii. c. 43.

^e De imag. non manif. et a S. Luca pict. c. 18 et 19.

^f Rom. Subterr. par. ii. c. 46. n. 10.

^g Theophyl. Argum. in Luc.

^h Hæres. li. c. 11.

ⁱ Theoph. ut prius Arabs vit. Script. ap. Kirsten. de quat. Evang. p. 39.

silence of scripture in the case, he himself plainly confesses, that he was not from the beginning "an eyewitness and minister of the word."^j Most probable it is, that he was converted by St. Paul during his abode at Antioch; whenas the apostles, of catchers of fish were become fishers of men, so he, of a physician of the body became a physician of the soul. This, Nicephorus^k will have to have been done at Thebes, the chief city of Bœotia, about forty miles from Athens, though it appears not to me, by any credible author, that ever St. Paul was there. He became ever after his inseparable companion and fellow-labourer in the ministry of the gospel, especially after his going into Macedonia; from which time, in recording the history of St. Paul's travels, he always speaks of himself in his own person.^l He followed him in all his dangers; was with him at his several arraignments at Jerusalem; accompanied him in his desperate voyage to Rome, where he still attended on him to serve his necessities, and supply those ministerial offices which the apostle's confinement would not suffer him to undergo, and especially in carrying messages to those churches where he had planted Christianity. This infinitely endeared him to St. Paul, who owned him for his fellow-labourer, called him "the beloved physician," and "the brother whose praise is in the gospel, throughout all the churches;" which the ancients, and especially Ignatius,^m apply to our evangelist.

III. Probable it is, that he did not wholly leave St. Paul till he had finished his course, and crowned all with martyrdom: though there are that tell us,ⁿ that he left St. Paul at Rome, and returned back into the East; travelled into Egypt and the parts of Lybia; preached the gospel, wrought miracles, converted multitudes, constituted guides and ministers of religion; yea, that he himself took upon him the episcopal charge of the city of Thebais. Epiphanius gives us this account:^o that he first preached in Dalmatia and Galatia, (he reads it, *ἐν τῇ Γαλλίᾳ*, "in Gaul," or France, and peremptorily affirms, that they are all mistaken that say that it was Galatia where Crescens preached, though some think that himself in the mean while is under the most confident mistake;) then in Italy and Macedonia, where he

^j Luke i. 2.

^k Lib. ii. c. 42.

^l Acts xvi. 10.

^m Epist. [interpol.] ad Ephes. s. 15.

ⁿ Metaphr. ubi supr. n. 11.

^o Hæres. l. i. c. 11.

spared no pains, declined no dangers, that he might faithfully discharge the trust committed to him. The ancients are not very well agreed, either about the time or manner of his death: some affirming him to die in Egypt, others in Greece, the Roman Martyrology in Bithynia,^p Dorotheus at Ephesus;^q some make him die a natural, others a violent death. Indeed, neither Eusebius nor St. Jerome take any notice of it: but Nazianzen,^r Paulinus bishop of Nola,^s and several others, expressly assert his martyrdom: whereof Nicephorus^t gives this particular account; that coming into Greece he successfully preached, and baptized many converts into the Christian faith, till a party of infidels making head against him, drew him to execution, and in want of a cross whereon to despatch him presently, hanged him upon an olive-tree, in the eightieth (the eighty-fourth says St. Jerome^u) year of his age. Kirstenius,^x from an ancient Arabic writer, makes him to have suffered martyrdom at Rome; which he thinks might probably be after St. Paul's first imprisonment there, and departure thence, when St. Luke being left behind as his deputy to supply his place, was shortly after put to death; the reason (says he) why he no longer continued his history of the Apostles' Acts, which surely he would have done, had he lived any considerable time after St. Paul's departure. His body afterwards, by the command of Constantine, or his son Constantius, was solemnly removed to Constantinople, and buried in the great church built to the memory of the apostles.

IV. Two books he wrote for the use of the church, his Gospel and the history of the Apostles' Acts, both dedicated to Theophilus; which many of the ancients suppose to be but a feigned name,^v denoting no more than a lover of God, a title common to every Christian; while others, with better reason, conclude it the proper name of a particular person, especially since the style of "most excellent" is attributed to him, the usual title and form of address in those times to princes and great men. Theophylact^z styles him, *συγκληρικὸν ἄνδρα καὶ ἄρχοντα ἰσως*, "a man

^p Ad diem 18 Octob.

^q De vit. et mort. App. in Bibl. Pp. vol. iii. p. 148.

^r Orat. i. in Julian. p. 76.

^s Epist. xii. ad Sever. de Basil.

^t Lib. ii. c. 43.

^u De Script. Eccl. in Luca.

^x Vit. quat. Evangel. p. 45.

^y Orig. Homil. i. in Luc. Ambros. in Luc. i. Vid. Epiph. Hæres. li. c. 17.

^z Argum. in Luc.

of consular dignity, and probably a prince ;” the author of the *Recognitions*^a makes him a nobleman of Antioch, converted by Peter, and who upon his conversion gave his house to the church for the place of their public and solemn meetings. We may probably suppose him to have been some magistrate, whom St. Luke had converted and baptized, to whom he now dedicated these books, not only as a testimony of honourable respect, but as a means of giving him farther certainty and assurance of those things wherein he had been instructed by him. For his gospel, St. Jerome^b supposes it to have been written in Achaia, during his travels with St. Paul in those parts, whose help he is generally said to have made use of in the composing of it, and that this the apostle primarily intends when he so often speaks of his gospel. But whatever assistance St. Paul might contribute towards it, we are sure the evangelist himself tells us, that he derived his intelligence in these matters from those, “who from the beginning had been eyewitnesses and ministers of the word.” Nor does it in the least detract from the authority of his relations, that he himself was not present at the doing of them ; for if we consider who they were from whom he derived his accounts of things, *Habuit utique authenticam paraturam*, as Tertullian speaks,^c he had a stock both of credit and intelligence sufficiently authentic to proceed upon, delivering nothing in his whole history but what he had immediately received from persons present at and concerned in the things which he has left upon record. The occasion of his writing it is thought to have been, partly to prevent those false and fabulous relations which even then began to be obtruded upon the world, partly to supply what seemed wanting in those two evangelists that wrote before him, and the additions or larger explications of things are particularly enumerated by Irenæus.^d He mainly insists upon what relates to Christ’s priestly office ; and though recording other parts of the evangelical story, yet it ever is with a peculiar respect to his priesthood. Upon which account, the ancients, in accommodating the four symbolical representments in the prophet’s vision to the four evangelists, assigned the ox or calf to St. Luke.

^a Lib. x. prope fin.

^c Adv. Marc. l. iv. c. 2.

^b Proem. in Matt.

^d Adv. Hæres. l. iii. c. 14.

V. His history of the Apostolic Acts was written, no doubt, at Rome, at the end of St. Paul's two years' imprisonment there, with which he concludes his story: it contains the actions, and sometimes the sufferings, of some principal apostles, especially St. Paul; for, besides that his activity in the cause of Christ made him bear a greater part both in doing and suffering, St. Luke was his constant attendant, an eyewitness of the whole carriage of his life, and privy to his most intimate transactions, and therefore capable of giving a more full and satisfactory account and relation of them; seeing no evidence or testimony in matters of fact can be more rational and convictive than his, who reports nothing but what he has heard and seen. Among other things, he gives us a particular account of those great miracles which the apostles did for the confirmation of their doctrine. And this (as Chrysostom informs us^c) was the reason why, in the primitive times, the book of the Acts, though containing those actions of the apostles that were done after Pentecost, were yet usually read in the church before it, in the space between that and Easter, whenas at all other times those parts of the gospel were read which were proper to the season: "it was (says he) because the apostle's miracles being the grand confirmation of the truth of Christ's resurrection, and those miracles recorded in that book, it was therefore thought most proper to be read next to the feast of the resurrection." In both these books his way and manner of writing is exact and accurate, his style polite and elegant, sublime and lofty, and yet clear and perspicuous; flowing with an easy and natural grace and sweetness, admirably accommodate to an historical design; all along expressing himself in a vein of purer Greek, than is to be found in the other writers of the holy story. Indeed, being born and bred at Antioch, (than which no place more famous for oratory and eloquence,) he could not but carry away a great share of the native genius of that place, though his style is sometimes allayed with a tang of the Syriac and Hebrew dialect. It was observed of old, (as St. Jerome tells us,^d) that his skill was greater in Greek than Hebrew; that therefore he always makes use of the Septuagint translation, and refuses sometimes to

^c Serm. Cur Act. App. legantur in Pentec. s. 6. vol. iii. p. 89.

^d Comm. in c. vi. Esai. Ibid. in c. xxviii. Epist. ad Damas.

render words, when the propriety of the Greek tongue will not bear it. In short, as an historian, he was faithful in his relations, elegant in his writings; as a minister, careful and diligent for the good of souls; as a Christian, devout and pious: and who crowned all the rest with the laying down his life for the testimony of that gospel which he had both preached and published to the world.

DYPTYCHA APOSTOLICA :

OR, A BRIEF ENUMERATION AND ACCOUNT OF THE APOSTLES AND THEIR SUCCESSORS FOR THE FIRST THREE HUNDRED YEARS IN THE FIVE GREAT CHURCHES, SAID TO HAVE BEEN FOUNDED BY THEM, THENCE CALLED BY THE ANCIENTS, APOSTOLICAL CHURCHES, VIZ. ANTIOCH, ROME, JERUSALEM, BYZANTIUM OR CONSTANTINOPLE, AND ALEXANDRIA.

ANTIOCH.

THIS I place first, partly because it is generally acknowledged, even by the Romish writers, that a church was founded here by St. Peter, some considerable time before that at Rome ; partly because here it was that the venerable name of Christians did first commence. In which respect, the fathers in the council at Constantinople under Nectarius,^a in their Synodicon to them at Rome, style the church of Antioch, *τὴν πρεσβυτάτην, καὶ ὅντως ἀποστολικήν*, "the most ancient and truly apostolical ;" and St. Chrysostom,^b "the head of the whole world." The succession of its bishops till the time of Constantine (which shall be the boundary of this catalogue) was as followeth.

- I. St. Peter the apostle, who governed this church at least seven years. Nicephorus of Constantinople says eleven.
- II. Euodius, who sat twenty-three years. In his time "the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch."
- III. Ignatius. After near forty years' presidency over this church he was carried out of Syria to Rome, and there thrown to wild beasts in the theatre, Ann. Chr. 110. Trajan 11.
- IV. Heron : he was bishop twenty years : to him succeeded
- V. Cornelius, who kept the place thirteen years, dying Ann. Chr. 142.
- VI. Eros, twenty-six, or, as Eusebius, twenty-four years.
- VII. Theophilus, thirteen : a man of great parts and learning ; many of his works were extant in Eusebius's time, and some of them we still have at this day.

^a Theod. Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. 9.

^b Hom. iii. ad Pop. Ant. s. l. vol. ii. p. 36.

VIII. Maximinus, thirteen : he dying, the next that was chosen was

IX. Serapio, twenty-five : many of his works are mentioned by Eusebius and St. Jerome. To him succeeded

X. Asclepiades, a man of great worth and eminency, and invincible constancy in the time of persecution ; he continued in this see nine years.

XI. Philetus, eight.

XII. Zebinus, or Zebennus : he sat six years.

XIII. Babylas, thirteen : after many conflicts and sufferings for the faith, he received the crown of martyrdom under Decius, and commanded his chains to be buried with him.

XIV. Fabius, or, as the patriarch Nicephorus calls him, Flavius, possessed the chair nine years. He was a little inclining towards Novatianism.

XV. Demetrianus : he sat bishop, says Nicephorus, four, says Eusebius, eight years.

XVI. Paulus Samosetanus sat in the chair eight years : when, for his unepiscopal manners and practices, his unsound *dogmata* and principles, and especially his mean and unworthy opinions concerning our Saviour, he was condemned and deposed by a synod at Antioch, whose synodical determination is at large extant in Eusebius.

XVII. Domnus succeeded in the place of the deposed. He was son to Demetrian, Paulus's predecessor in that see ; constituted and ordained to the place by the fathers of that synod, who farther give him this honourable character : that he was a man endued with all episcopal virtues and ornaments. Eusebius makes him to have sitten six, Nicephorus but two years.

XVIII. Timeus : he sat in the chair ten years.

XIX. Cyrillus: who presided over that church, in the account of Nicephorus, fifteen, of Eusebius, twenty-four years.

XX. Tyrannus: he sat thirteen years; in his time began the tenth persecution under Dioclesian, which raged with great severity.

XXI. Vitalia, six.

XXII. Philogonius, five: succeeded by

XXIII. Paulinus, or, as Nicephorus calls him, Paulus: who after five years was deposed and driven out by the prevalency of the Arian faction.

XXIV. Eustathius, formerly bishop of Beroea; a learned man, and of great note and eminency in the council of Nice, the first general council, summoned by the great Constantine, after he had restored peace and prosperity to the church.

ROME.

THE foundation of this church is, with just probabilities of reason, by many of the fathers equally attributed to Peter and Paul: the one, as apostle of the circumcision, preaching to the Jews; while the other, probably as the apostle of the uncircumcision, preached to the Gentiles. Its bishops succeeded in this order.

I. St. Peter and St. Paul, who both suffered martyrdom under Nero.

II. Linus, the son of Herculaneus, a Tuscan; he is mentioned by St. Paul: he sat between eleven and twelve years.

III. Cletus, or Anacletus, or Anencletus, supposed by many to be the same person, (though others who reckon Anacletus a Greek, born at Athens, make them distinct, whom yet we have left out, not being mentioned by Eusebius,) a Roman, the son of Æmilianus, sat nine, though others say but two years.

IV. Clemens, a Roman, born in mount Cœlius, the son of Faustinus, near akin, say some, to the emperor: he was condemned to dig in the marble-quarries near the Euxine sea; and by the command of Trajan, with an anchor about his neck, thrown into the sea. He was bishop of Rome nine years and four months.

V. Euarestus, by birth a Greek, but his father a Jew of Bethlehem. He is said to have been crowned with martyrdom the last year of Trajan, in the ninth of his bishopric, or, as others, the thirteenth.

VI. Alexander, a Roman: though young in years, was grave in his manners and conversation. He sat ten years and seven months, and died a martyr.

VII. Xystus, or Sixtus, a Roman: he was martyred in the tenth year of his bishopric, and buried in the Vatican.

VIII. Telesphorus, a Greek, succeeded. Justin the Martyr flourished in his time. He died a martyr, having sat eleven years and three months; ten years and eight months say others; and lies buried near St. Peter in the Vatican.

IX. Hyginus, the son of an Athenian philosopher, was advanced to the chair, under Antoninus Pius: he sat four years; Eusebius says eight.

X. Pius, an Italian, born at Aquileia: he died, having been bishop eleven years and four months; according to Eusebius, fifteen years.

XI. Anicetus, born in Syria: he is said, after nine, or as others eleven years, to have suffered martyrdom, and was buried in the *Via Appia* in the cemetery of Callistus. In his time Polycarp came to Rome.

XII. Soter, or, as Nicephorus calls him, Soterichus, was a Campanian, the son of Concordius. There was an intercourse of letters between him and Dionysius bishop of Corinth. He died after he had sat nine years; or as Eusebius reckons seven.

XIII. Eleutherius, born at Nicopolis in Greece. To him Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter and an embassy. He sat fifteen years, died Ann. Chr. 186, and lies buried in the Vatican.

XIV. Victor, an African, the son of Felix: a man of a furious and intemperate spirit, as appeared in his passionate proceedings in the controversy about the observation of Easter. He was bishop ten years; Onuphrius assigns him twelve years and one month.

XV. Zephyrinus, a Roman, succeeded, and possessed the chair eight, but as others eighteen years; twenty, says Onuphrius. A pious and learned man, but a little warping towards the errors of Montanus.

XVI. Callistus, or Calixtus, the son of Domitius, a Roman; a prudent and modest man. He suffered much in the persecution under Alexander Severus, under whom he became a martyr, being thrown into a well by the procurement of Ulpian the great lawyer, but severe enemy of Christians. He sat six years, or five as others, and one month; and though he made a cemetery called after his own name, yet was he buried in that of Calepodius, in the Appian Way.

XVII. Urbanus, the son of Pontianus, a Roman: after four, or as some, six years, he suffered martyrdom for the faith; Eu-

sebius has five, St. Jerome in his translation nine. He was buried in Pretextatus's cemetery in the Appian Way.

XXVIII. Pontianus, the son of Calphurnius, a Roman: for his bold reproving the Roman idolatry he was banished into the island Sardinia, where he died. He was bishop about three or four, or, as Eusebius, five years.

XIX. Anteros, a Greek, the son of Romulus: he died by that he had kept his place one month; though others, without reason, make him to have lived in it many years, and was buried in the cemetery of Callistus.

XX. Fabianus, a Roman: he was unexpectedly chosen bishop: while several others being in competition, a pigeon suddenly descended and sat upon his head, the great emblem of the Holy Spirit. He died a martyr, after fourteen years: buried in the same place with his predecessor.

XXI. Cornelius, a Roman: he opposed and condemned Novatian: frequent letters passed between him and Cyprian. After somewhat more than two years, he was first cruelly whipped, and then beheaded: buried in a vault within the grange of Lucina, near the Appian Way.

XXII. Lucius, a Roman, sat two, or, as others, three years. He suffered martyrdom by the command of Valerian, and was buried in Callistus's cemetery.

XXIII. Stephanus, a Roman, the son of Julius. Great contests were between him and Cyprian about rebaptizing those who had been baptized by heretics. He was beheaded, after he had sat about two or three years, though others say seven, and buried with his predecessor.

XXIV. Xystus, a Greek, formerly a philosopher of Athens. After one, or, as others compute, two years and ten months, he suffered martyrdom; Eusebius reckons it eight years.

XXV. Dionysius, of a monk made bishop, *ἀδελφὸς τε καὶ θαυμάσιος*: in the judgment of Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, "a truly learned and admirable person." The time of his presidency is uncertainly assigned, six, nine, ten, eleven: Eusebius extends it to twelve years.

XXVI. Felix, a Roman: in his time arose the Manichaean heresy. He suffered about the fourth or fifth year of his episcopacy, and lies buried in the Aurelian Way, in a cemetery of his own, two miles from Rome.

XXVII. Eutychianus, a Tuscan, a man exceedingly careful of the burial of martyrs, after one year's space was himself crowned with martyrdom. Eusebius allows him but

eight months; Onuphrius, eight years and six months.

XXVIII. Caius, or, as Eusebius calls him, Gaianus, a Dalmatian, kinsman to the emperor Dioclesian, and in the persecution under him became a martyr. He sat eleven years, some say longer; Eusebius, fifteen years. He was beheaded, and buried in Callistus's cemetery.

XXIX. Marcellinus, a Roman: through fear of torment he did sacrifice to the gods; but recovering himself, died a martyr, after he had sat eight or nine years. He was beheaded, and buried in the cemetery of Priscilla, in the Salarian Way. To him succeeded

XXX. Marcellus, a Roman: he was condemned, by Maxentius the tyrant, to keep beasts in a stable, which yet he performed with his prayers and exercises of devotion. He died after five years and six months, and was buried in the cemetery of Priscilla.

XXXI. Eusebius, a Greek, the son of a physician: he suffered much under the tyranny of Maxentius. He sat six years, say some; four, say others; though Eusebius allows him but seven months; Onuphrius, one year and seven months. He was buried in the Appian Way, near Callistus's cemetery.

XXXII. Miltiades, an African. He might be a confessor under Maxentius, but could not be a martyr under Maximinus, as some report him. He sat three or four, though others assign him but two years, and was buried in the cemetery of Callistus.

XXXIII. Silvester, a Roman: he was elected into the place Ann. Chr. 314, fetched from the mountain Soracte, whither he had fled for fear of persecution. He was highly in favour with Constantine the Great. He sat twenty-three, Nicephorus says twenty-eight years.

JERUSALEM.

THE church of Jerusalem may in some sense be said to have been founded by our Lord himself, as it was for some time cultivated and improved by the ministry of the whole college of apostles. The bishops of it were as followeth.

I. St. James the Less, the brother of our Lord: by him, say some, immediately constituted bishop; but, as others, more probably by the apostles. He was thrown off the temple, and knocked on the head with a fuller's club.

- II. Symeon, the son of Cleopas, brother to Joseph, our Lord's reputed father. He sat in this chair twenty-three years, and suffered martyrdom in the reign of Trajan, in the one hundred and twentieth year of his age.
- III. Justus succeeded in his room, and sat six years.
- IV. Zacchæus, or, as Nicephorus the patriarch calls him, Zacharias, four.
- V. Tobias: to him, after four years, succeeded
- VI. Benjamin, who sat two years.
- VII. John, who continued the same space.
- VIII. Matthias, or Matthæus, two years.
- IX. Philippus, one year: next came
- X. Seneca, who sat four years.
- XI. Justus, four.
- XII. Levi, or Lebes, two.
- XIII. Ephrem, or Ephra, or, as Epiphanius styles him, Vaphrea, two.
- XIV. Joseph, two.
- XV. Judas, two. Most of these bishops we may observe to have sat but a short time, following one another with a very quick succession; which doubtless was in a great measure owing to the turbulent and unquiet humour of the Jewish nation, frequently rebelling against the Roman powers, whereby they provoked them to fall heavy upon them, and cut off all that came in their way, making no distinction between Jews and Christians: as, indeed, they were all Jews, though differing in the rites of their religion. For hitherto the bishops of Jerusalem had successively been of the circumcision; the church there having been entirely made up of Jewish converts. But Jerusalem being now utterly laid waste, and the Jews dispersed into all other countries, the Gentiles were admitted not only into the body of that church, but even into the episcopal chair. The first whereof was
- XVI. Marcus, who sat eight years.
- XVII. Cassianus, eight.
- XVIII. Publius, five.
- XIX. Maximus, four.
- XX. Julianus, two.
- XXI. Caianus, three.
- XXII. Symmachus, two.
- XXIII. Caius, three.
- XXIV. Julianus, four.
- XXV. Elias, two. I find not this bishop mentioned by Eusebius; but he is recorded by Nicephorus of Constantinople.
- XXVI. Capito, four.
- XXVII. Maximus, four.
- XXVIII. Antoninus, five.
- XXIX. Valens, three.
- XXX. Dulichianus, two.
- XXXI. Narcissus, four. He was a man

of eminent piety, famous for the great miracles which he wrought; but not being able to bear the aspersions which some unjustly cast upon him, (though God signally and miraculously vindicated his innocency,) he left his church, and retired into deserts and solitudes. In his absence was chosen

XXXII. Dius, who sat eight years. After him

XXXIII. Germanio, four.

XXXIV. Gordius, five. In his time Narcissus, as one from the dead, returned from his solitude, and was imported by the people again to take the government of the church upon him; being highly revered by them, both for his strict and philosophical course of life, and the signal vengeance which God took of his accusers. And in this second administration he continued ten years, suffering martyrdom when he was near one hundred and twenty years old. To relieve the infirmities of his great age, they took in to be his colleague

XXXV. Alexander, formerly bishop in Cappadocia, who at that time had, out of devotion, taken a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; the choice being extraordinarily designed by a particular revelation from heaven. He was an eminent confessor; and after having sat fifteen years, died in prison under the Decian persecution. By him Origen was ordained presbyter. He was a great patron of learning as well as religion; a studious preserver of the records of the church. He erected a library at Jerusalem, which he especially furnished with the writings and epistles of ecclesiastical persons. And out of this treasury it was that Eusebius borrowed a great part of his materials for the composing of his history.

XXXVI. Mazabanes, nine years.

XXXVII. Hymenæus, twenty-three.

XXXVIII. Zabdas, ten.

XXXIX. Hermon, nine. He was, as Eusebius tells us, the last bishop of this see, before that fatal persecution that raged even in his time.

XL. Macarius, ordained Ann. Chr. 315. He was present in the great Nicene council. He sat, says Nicephorus of Constantinople, twenty years, but St. Jerome allows him a much longer time.

BYZANTIUM,

AFTERWARDS CALLED CONSTANTINOPLE

THAT this church was first founded by

St. Andrew, we have shewed in his Life. The succession of its bishops was as followeth.

- I. St. Andrew the Apostle. He was crucified at Patræ in Achaia.
- II. Stachys, whom St. Paul calls "his beloved Stachys," ordained bishop by St. Andrew. He sat sixteen years.
- III. Onesimus, fourteen.
- IV. Polycarpus, seventeen.
- V. Plutarchus, sixteen.
- VI. Sedecio, nine.
- VII. Diogenes, fifteen. Of the last three no mention is made in Nicephorus of Constantinople, but they are delivered by Nicephorus Callistus, l. viii. c. 6.
- VIII. Eleutherius, seven.
- IX. Felix, five.
- X. Polycarpus, seventeen.
- XI. Athenodorus, four. He erected a church called Elea, afterwards much beautified and enlarged by Constantine the Great.
- XII. Euzoios, sixteen; though Nicephorus Callistus allows but six.
- XIII. Laurentius, eleven years and six months.
- XIV. Alpius, thirteen.
- XV. Pertinax, a man of consular dignity. He built another church near the sea-side, which he called Peace. He sat nineteen years, which Nicephorus Callistus reduces to nine.
- XVI. Olympianus, eleven.
- XVII. Marcus, thirteen.
- XVIII. Cyriacus, or Cyrillianus, sixteen.
- XIX. Constantinus, seven. In the first year of his bishopric, he built a church in the north part of the city, which he dedicated to the honour of Euphemia the martyr, who had suffered in that place. In this oratory he spent the remainder of his life, quitting his episcopal chair to
- XX. Titus; who sat thirty-five years and six months, though Nicephorus Callistus makes it thirty-seven years. After him came
- XXI. Dometius, brother (as they tell us) to the emperor Probus: he was bishop twenty-one years and six months.
- XXII. Probus succeeded his father Dometius, and sat twelve years. As after him
- XXIII. Metrophanes, his brother, who governed that church ten years. And in his time it was that Constantine translated the imperial court hither, enlarged and adorned it, called it after his own name, and made it the seat of the empire.
- XXIV. Alexander succeeded: a man of great piety and integrity, zealous and

constant in maintaining the truth against the blasphemies of Arius. He sat twenty-three years.

ALEXANDRIA.

THE foundations of this church were laid, and a great part of its superstructure raised by St. Mark; who though not strictly and properly an apostle, yet being an apostle at large, and immediately commissioned by St. Peter, it justly obtained the honour of an apostolical church. Its bishops and governors are thus recorded.

- I. St. Mark the Evangelist, of whose travels and martyrdom we have spoken in his Life. Nicephorus of Constantinople makes him to sit two years.
- II. Anianus: characterized by Eusebius, *ἀνὴρ θεοφιλῆς, καὶ τὰ πάντα θαυμάσιος*, "a man beloved of God, and admirable in all things." He ruled in that throne twenty-two years.
- III. Avilius, twelve; or, as Eusebius, thirteen.
- IV. Cerdo succeeded about the first year of Trajan. He sat ten years; according to Eusebius, eleven.
- V. Primus, twelve.
- VI. Justus, or Justinus, ten.
- VII. Eumenes, ten; or, as Eusebius, thirteen. St. Jerome in his translation calls him Hymenæus.
- VIII. Marcus, or, Marcianus, thirteen; or, as Eusebius, ten.
- IX. Celadion, ten; but in Eusebius's computation, fourteen.
- X. Agrippinus, fourteen; according to Eusebius, twelve.
- XI. Julianus, fifteen; though Eusebius allows but ten.
- XII. Demetrius, twenty-one; but Eusebius more truly makes him to have governed that church no less than forty-three years. He was a man of great zeal and piety, and underwent many troubles in the persecution at Alexandria. He was at first a great friend to Origen, but afterwards became his enemy, laying some irregularities to his charge: partly out of emulation at the great reputation which Origen had gained in the world; partly, in that Origen had suffered himself to be ordained presbyter by two other bishops, Alexander bishop of Jerusalem, and Theoctistus of Cæsarea.
- XIII. Heraclas, a man of a philosophical genius and way of life. He was educated under the institution of Origen, and by him taken to be his assistant in the school

of the catechumens, the whole government whereof he afterwards resigned to him ; and upon the death of Demetrius he was advanced to the government of that church, the care whereof he took for sixteen years ; though Nicephorus of Constantinople, by a mistake, I suppose, for his predecessor, makes it forty-three.

XIV. Dionysius, seventeen. He was one of the most eminent bishops of his time. He was one of Origen's scholars, then preferred first master of the catechetical school at Alexandria, and afterwards bishop of that see. In the persecution under Decius he was banished first to Taposiria, a little town between Alexandria and Canopus ; then to Cephro, and other places in the deserts of Libya. But a large account of his own and others' sufferings, with many other transactions of those times, we have out of his own letters, yet extant in Eusebius. He died in the twelfth year of the emperor Galienus.

XV. Maximus : of a presbyter he was made bishop of Alexandria. He sat in that chair eighteen years, according to

Eusebius's computation, though Nicephorus of Constantinople assigns but eight.

XVI. Theonas, seventeen ; or, according to St. Jerome's version of Eusebius, nineteen. To him succeeded

XVII. Petrus, twelve. He began his office three years before the last persecution. A man of infinite strictness and accuracy, and of indefatigable industry for the good of the church. He suffered in the ninth year of the persecution, with the loss of his head, gaining the crown of martyrdom. After whose death came in the prosperous and happy days of the church ; Constantine the Great turning the black and dismal scene of things into a state of calmness and serenity.

XVIII. Achilles, nine ; though Nicephorus of Constantinople allows him but one year. By him Arius, upon his submission, was ordained presbyter.

XIX. Alexander, twenty-three. Under him Arius began more openly to broach his heresy at Alexandria, who was thereupon excommunicated and thrust out by Alexander, and shortly after condemned by the fathers of the council of Nice.

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